MAY 1956

COMMENTARY

The Soviet Threat in the Middle East
Western Self-Interest & Israeli Self-Defense — HAL LEHRMAN
The Moscow-Cairo Axis — WALTER Z. LAQUEUR

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Two Poems

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On the Horizon
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The Study of Man
Childhood the World Over — STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Jakob J. Petuchowski — Philip Rahv — Dennis H. Wrong
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COMMENTARY

MAY 1956 VOLUME 21, NUMBER 5

The Soviet Threat in the Middle East		
Western Self-Interest and Israeli Self-Defense	*Hal Lehrman*	401
The Moscow-Cairo Axis	*Walter Z. Laqueur*	409
Freud's Mother and Father	*Judith Bernays Heller*	418
American Jewry: Present and Future	*Herbert J. Gans*	422
Desegregation: Prince Edward County, Va.	*James Rorty*	431
Galya *A True Story*	*Julius Margolin*	439
The Perennial Spinoza	*Felix Weltsch*	448
California—The America to Come	*H. Stuart Hughes*	454
From the American Scene		
"Papa"	*David Boroff*	461
Cedars of Lebanon		
Wisdom for a Time of Reckoning		466
The Village of My Fathers *A Poem*	*Jerome A. Barron*	467
My Mother's Father *A Poem*	*Martin Halpern*	468
On the Horizon		
Truman and the Idea of the Common Man	*Norman Podhoretz*	469
The Study of Man		
Childhood the World Over	*Stanley Edgar Hyman*	475
Letters from Readers		481
Books in Review		
The Bridge, edited by John M. Oesterreicher	*Jakob J. Petuchowski*	484
The Quiet American, by Graham Greene	*Philip Rahv*	488
The Fears Men Live By, by Selma Hirsh	*Dennis H. Wrong*	490
Orestes Brownson, Selected Essays, edited by Russell Kirk	*Bernard W. Wishy*	492
Notes of a Native Son, by James Baldwin	*Robert W. Flint*	494
The Foreseeable Future, by Sir George Thomson; Utopia 1976, by Morris L. Ernst; Time for Living, by George Soule	*Theodore Norman*	496

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Desegregation in Perspective *C. Vann Woodward*

A leading historian of the South considers the current strife over desegregation in the context of the Reconstruction period and the history of Jim Crow.

Western Policy for the Middle East *G. F. Hudson*

A historian with a special interest in the Orient projects an Anglo-American policy for the Middle East designed to promote peace and check Soviet infiltration.

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In a survey of some of the current literature on educating the unusually intelligent child, a teacher of long experience considers what can and is being done by our schools to realize the promise of precocity and special ability.

Will Judaism Survive in America? *Herbert Gans*

In a second and concluding article, the author of this month's "American Jewry: Present and Future," extrapolates present trends into the future, attempting to determine what will happen to Jewish life as we know it.

Negro Folk Tales in the North *Robert Graves*

The eminent English poet and man of letters compares the American Negro adaptations of several universally known folk stories with European versions of the same tales, coming up with an informal portrait of the Negro imagination.

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COMMENTARY

WESTERN SELF-INTEREST AND ISRAELI SELF-DEFENSE

They Coincide

HAL LEHRMAN

"If Israel is dissuaded from using the life force of their race to ward off the Egyptians until the Egyptians have learned to use the Russian weapons with which they have been supplied and the Egyptians then attack, it will become not only a matter of prudence but a measure of honor to make sure that they are not the losers by waiting."—Sir Winston Churchill

IN THE two months just past, the threat of Middle Eastern war has taken up fixed residence on the world's front pages. All the wisdom of the world's statesmen has made no measurable progress in allaying the crisis. In Washington, and to some extent still in London and Paris, policy remains muddled by the obsessive belief that Arab reasonableness can be obtained by gift, entreaty, and gentle admonition. In the United Nations, nobody is even looking for solutions any more; the best to be hoped for—if East and West can compromise their differences—is some wordy and complicated stratagem which will have the dubious advantage of "gaining time." And in the Middle East itself the record shows a perilous decline of the Western position.

Britain's ignominious ejection from Jordan has begun. Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia have held semi-public deliberations on ways and means of speeding British departure and winning over Jordan to their side. Jordan has concerted with Syria on mutual military aid along their Israeli borders. Remote Yemen has been drawn into Egypt's system of military alliances with Syria and Saudi Arabia. The Cairo radio, not content with the trouble it has helped to make in North Africa, has begun to foment revolt as far away as Zanzibar. There is a brisk traffic of Soviet satellite instructors bound for Egypt to teach, and of Egyptian military teams bound for Eastern Europe to learn, the operation and maintenance of the complicated weapons obtained by Cairo at bargain prices from Prague.

The West, quite clearly, is simply muddling along, without a studied policy for the Arab-Israeli dispute—or for the larger threat of Arab-Soviet friendship and loss of the Middle East. In both areas, however, the interest of the free world, and the

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THE crisis in the Middle East cries for solution more urgently than ever, and HAL LEHRMAN, in the third of a series of articles, reports one proposed line of action. The first of the series, "Three Weeks in Cairo," appeared in February, and the second, "Is an Arab-Israeli War Inevitable?" in March. Mr. Lehrman, who is a well-known lecturer as well as political reporter and commentator, needs no introduction to our readers. Among the books he has written are *Russia's Europe* (1947) and *Israel: The Beginning and Tomorrow* (1952).

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national interest of the United States, are dangerously involved. The search for an effective policy is therefore obligatory, however futile the previous efforts have been.

AT THIS writing it is possible, by straining, to derive comfort from indications that Western capitals are beginning dimly to recognize the desirability of enabling Israel, for her hard cash, to purchase *some* weapons similar in quality to the new Egyptian arms. An elementary justification for this step would be Israel's obvious need to be able to defend herself. More important, it would dampen the Arabs' intoxication with their own increasing strength. The Egyptians are acutely aware of Israeli prowess in the field. If Cairo knows that the Israelis have obtained the means for counter-attack, it will not dare provoke an all-out war. Left-handedly, the State Department has intimated that it has "no objection" to sale of arms to Israel by the "traditional" suppliers of Middle Eastern arms, Britain and France.

The latter powers are described, with some reason, as considering this a hypocritical—and futile—ruse to divert Arab resentment from the United States. Nevertheless, there are some signs that narrow cracks may be developing in that Western wall which, except for clearance of some French jet planes and a miscellany of auxiliary items, has so far prevented Israel from acquiring the arms capable of confronting Egypt's Soviet equipment.

But it will take more than a thin trickle of modern weapons to keep Gamal Abdel Nasser's junta prudent, or give Israel the security to which she feels entitled in view of declared Arab hostility. Moreover, even full achievement of an arms balance can only have a negative value. It can dissuade the Arabs from making war—but it cannot compel them to make peace. Israel will still be confronted by the enervating drain of maximum preparedness. The West will still be harassed by Arab intransigence on all fronts, and Arab willingness to accommodate the Soviets will almost certainly grow, to the greater jeopardy of the entire Middle East.

IN A previous article in these pages (March) this writer examined—and noted the flaws in—the possible lines of action usually envisaged in any "tough" policy of political and economic sanctions which the West might adopt toward the Arabs. However, in some quarters familiar with the Arab mind it is felt that another means of bringing the Arabs to their senses lies close at hand.

Every non-Arab military observer in the Middle East—and every candid Arab observer as well—knows that the Arabs are actually more afraid of the Israeli soldiers, man for man, than they are of the whole might and power of West and East combined. They do not expect to have to fight the remote Americans, British, or Russians. But they know that a test of battle with the Israelis next door is a very real possibility. They have undergone such tests before, and they remember the results ruefully. Even now, with all their newly acquired massive armor, they are very respectful of their "Zionist" neighbor's military ability.

Not until the Arabs have grown considerably more proficient in the use of this equipment, and confident that they can propel it across the border in one massive knockout blow without the smallest chance of reprisal, will they cease regarding Israel as a holy terror. Meanwhile certain military experts—and even a section of sober Israeli opinion—are beginning to reflect on the possibilities of exploiting this military inferiority complex to deflate an Arab political arrogance which, unless checked, will end by knocking the last props out from under the Western position in the Middle East—and by ruining the Arabs as well, to the sole profit of the Kremlin.

The idea of playing on Arab respect for Israeli fighting skill to call the Arab diplomatic bluff against the West has not yet recommended itself to the West's own diplomats. There are many precedents for such diplomatic failure to see the obvious when the conclusions from the obvious require daring action. When the Nazis marched into the Rhineland, they could have been marched right out again if the British and French had

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called their bluff—without a shot fired. When the Russians began gobbling up Eastern Europe in violation of World War II commitments, they could have been induced to disgorge if the British and Americans had called their bluff. (President Truman, later, called it in Iran with complete success and not an ounce of powder burned.)

Such bluffs are not challenged because the risks are too large; it takes imagination to perceive that the risks of allowing the bluff to stand, as evident in the examples above, are even larger. So runs the argument of certain qualified observers, in Israel and elsewhere. In the present case, Western policy-makers still cling to the notion that the Arabs can be wheedled, bribed, and maneuvered into "loyalty." Perhaps the French, fed up with Egyptian backbiting, might support a stern Western policy. But the French, with most of their effectives already involved elsewhere, are the weakest of the Big Three. Though the British are now disenchanted with Nasser and reportedly itching to deal sternly with him, they are so wedded to dependence on Arab friendship that they might, in exchange for the smallest bone, begin believing all over again in a policy of concessions. It is the State Department, above all, that remains hopeful that such a policy will succeed—and the State Department sets the direction of Western diplomacy in today's Middle East.

The State Department view recoils from any suggestion of a showdown with the Arabs. It persists in seeking to placate them so as not to "provoke" them into further collaboration with the Soviets. It rests on the assumption—negated by all previous experience with the Arabs—that they appreciate the generosity implicit in concessions and will not despise those who offer them. American diplomacy has not yet discovered that appeasing the Arabs in order to keep them out of Moscow's clutches will only make the Arabs more demanding—and more dependent on Moscow as the lever for the next turn of the screw on the West. Western willingness to finance Egypt's High Dam at Aswan, for instance, has merely increased Arab enthusiasm for the Soviets, whose vague offer to help with the dam is credited with having forced the West's hand. In recent declarations, Premier Nasser has excelled himself in cockiness, and made no effort to hide his intention of working the Soviet bogey to the limit. Such cockiness is the direct result of the bowing and scraping by Western spokesmen in his anteroom.

Critics of Western policy hold that the way to stop losing the Middle East is to choke off the game of diplomatic blackmail which the Arabs are playing. And there are observers with no stake in the fate of Israel, except insofar as it involves that of the West too, who see in Israeli military superiority an effective diplomatic instrument by which to bring the Arabs to terms.

If the Arabs are not brought to terms—these same observers feel—the Arabs' own folly will eventually make them, as well as the Israelis, victims of the Soviets. Israel's existence—at least as a free society—would be snuffed out by the Sovietization of the Arab world. At a certain point on the road to Middle Eastern ruin, therefore, Israel will be compelled for the sake of sheer survival to throw off Western inhibitions and devise an independent policy of her own. That policy may include an attempt by Israel alone to call the Arab bluff.

How could the West wisely exploit the real and persisting Arab fear of Israeli battle superiority? Will a tactic that exploits that fear necessarily lead to war?

It suits Nasser's propaganda to assert that Israel has no reason for alarm over Egypt's armament because Israel is protected by the Anglo-Franco-American guarantee of 1950. The implication is that the West, and in particular the United States, shields the "Zionist" state. The fact is that the Tripartite Declaration, though woolly as to implementation, guarantees *all* existing Arab-Israeli frontiers, including the *Arab* sides of them. Egypt's saber-rattling, her small adventures along the Gaza strip, the incursions of the *fedayeen* suicide squads, the Syrian attacks on Israeli fishermen, the brandishing of fists

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by Jordan's Arab Legion—all this is done on the assumption that, should the enraged Israelis venture on full-scale retaliation, the West would rush forward, under the Tripartite guarantee, and stop them. Israel would emerge with nothing gained except the stigma of aggressor. It is under the umbrella of the Tripartite Declaration, which Nasser and his friends profess to despise, that the Arabs have been able to embark with impunity on a massive arms program, to reject negotiation, and to proclaim that there can be no peace with Israel until she has accepted impossible terms.

Under this umbrella, too, Egypt has been able to bait the West and woo the Russians, secure in the assurance that Egypt's front with Israel cannot erupt because the West itself—absurd though it now may seem—is guarantor of a peace that the Arabs themselves refuse to recognize. As long as Egypt has only the confused and anxious West to worry about, she can flirt with Moscow as boldly as she likes.

But what if Nasser should suddenly find himself faced by a single-minded—and unhampered—Israel? How much leisure would he retain to plan new diplomatic maneuvers? Suppose that, on any morning during the next weeks, and wearing appropriate poker-faces, the ambassadors of France, Britain, and the U. S. in Cairo were to convene before the Egyptian Premier's desk and hold discourse with him somewhat as follows:

"In 1950 our governments announced they would apply sanctions against any aggression on frontiers and armistice lines around Israel. The purpose of this guarantee was to protect all parties and facilitate negotiations between Israel and the Arab states with a view to transforming the armistices into peace treaties. We are now compelled to note that this purpose has failed.

"We do not blame you—or Israel. We simply observe that there is no peace, and that our guarantee has not achieved the purpose for which we undertook it six years ago. Therefore, Mr. Prime Minister, as of 5 A. M. next Sunday, we are annulling the guarantee. We leave you and the Israelis to settle your differences between you—without hindrance from outside. How you settle them, or do not settle them, is not our affair. We merely invite your attention, with the friendliest of motives, to the fact that your policy of non-negotiation with Israel may have unhappy consequences. When one party to a dispute persists in maintaining a state of belligerency, it runs the risk that the other party may eventually turn belligerent too. Mr. Prime Minister, we bid you good day. . . ."

The advocates of such a move concede that it is daring. How could the mid-20th century countenance such "ruthless" 19th-century diplomacy? And wouldn't a vacuum be created into which the Russians could enter? Foreseeing these disconcerting questions, the advocates of a Western policy based on Israel's fighting strength propose two further steps, one prior to the proposed colloquy with Nasser, one afterward.

THE first step would be to expose the UN's inability to obtain peace. (UN Secretary General Dag Hammerskjold's "success" in obtaining an Israeli-Egyptian cease-fire last month merely eased a current irritation temporarily; it brought no relief for the basic malady—absence of peace—which can flare up in fresh outbreaks any time.) Let a tripartite resolution at once be presented to the Security Council calling for direct Arab-Israeli general negotiations within a brief time limit. Unless the Soviets are prepared to lose all the advantages so far gained in Arab affections, they will veto this move. (A similar move in the General Assembly would be similarly defeated by the combined efforts of the Soviet and Arab blocs.) The UN thus having tried once again and failed, the three guarantor powers could then visit Nasser.

Immediately after withdrawal of the envoys from the Premier's presence, a joint note from Washington, London, and Paris could be sped to Moscow containing notification of the Tripartite Declaration's annulment, with the following addendum:

"We consider the Arab-Israeli dissension to be purely a local dispute. The locality

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is situated in an area where our three governments and their nationals possess clear and established interests. Nevertheless, we will not intervene in settlement of the local dispute—and we are confident that no other government will intervene. Any such intervention will be regarded by us as a hostile act. . . ."

Would Moscow pick up this challenge? It can be argued that the Soviets would not need to. They could seize the opportunity to meddle (and improve their standing with the Arabs) simply by pouring more arms into Alexandria—a "commercial transaction" against which the West could legitimately take no exception. True. But there is a saturation point for a backward country like Egypt beyond which extra planes and tanks simply cannot be absorbed. A deluge of arms would not affect the Arab-Israeli issues right now—so long as the Israelis already had an adequate supply of the same types of weapon. It takes skilled personnel to handle such arms, and time to learn how. The Egyptians lack the know-how, and the Israelis, by speedily moving to call their bluff, would not give them the time.

But what if Soviet and satellite "volunteers" were ready to man Egypt's new weapons? Wouldn't that mean Egyptian willingness to fight—and, eventually, war with the West? In the light of the grim Western notice against a "hostile act," it certainly would—which makes it extremely unlikely that Moscow would permit such "volunteering." For the Soviets to defy the West under these circumstances, one would have to assume that they were ready and eager for war. If so, would they let the West pick the time? Or the place? Every adventure the Soviets have undertaken to date indicates that *they* pick the time and place. If they were seeking World War III, would they start it in the Middle East, where, of all conceivable theaters of action, they are most at disadvantage for bases and communication lines? Wouldn't they, instead, seize West Berlin, or strike at Vietnam, South Korea, or any other point to which the Communist empire had easier access than to the Levant? And wouldn't they select a moment designed to give them the benefit of maximum surprise?

It makes no sense to suppose that the Soviets will sacrifice all this for the relatively minor advantage of stirring the Arab-Israeli pot. Nor can the West be charged with provocation if it serves notice that Soviet meddling would be a *casus belli*. The three Western powers have at least as much right to protect their interests in the Middle East as the Soviets have, say, in Eastern Europe. Any attempt from Moscow to replace the Tripartite guarantee by one of its own would be as impertinent—and provocative—as a Western attempt to inaugurate and supervise free elections in Bulgaria or Rumania. As a matter of fact, Moscow in mid-April actually denounced all projects to intervene in the Israeli-Arab issue. Thus the Soviets' stated position—whatever it may be worth—suggests that, if anything, they would have to endorse the West's annulment of the Tripartite guarantee as consistent with the ban on all intervention from outside. Assuming, then, that the West stands firm in its resolve to isolate the Arab-Israeli argument, the Russians can be confidently relied on to keep clear.

WHAT would Israel do? For the first time, she would argue her case with and against the Arabs on its merits and with full use of her bargaining power—unhampered by the prospect of Western restraint, discriminations, or sanctions.

She would, according to the advocates of such a showdown policy, remind Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon that each had pledged, in the armistices of 1949, to proceed with her from temporary armistice to permanent peace treaty—not to permanent belligerency. She would certainly invite them—one more time in a long series of such invitations—to sit, negotiate, and make peace with her. If her invitation were again spurned, she would demand at least that hostile acts by the armistice signatories—in particular Egypt—should cease. She would insist that the blockades at Suez and Eylat

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be lifted as intolerable restrictions. Otherwise, Israel would serve notice, she would be compelled to draw the logical consequences from Cairo's assertions that Egypt was still at war with her. Israel would move to *defend* the armistice to which Egypt had agreed. Any continued or new violation of that armistice by Egypt would itself be *aggression,* and would justify full Israeli counter-measures.

What would Egypt do? She would not attack, the spokesmen for this line of action argue. On the contrary, there would be an even chance, according to them, that Nasser would attempt to grope his way to the conference table; faced suddenly by an actual showdown with an adversary whose proven superiority he knows, and against whom he has lost all protections from abroad, he would have eloquent reasons to seek the surer protections of a peace treaty. Could he do so without committing political suicide? It would be risky. But if he is as strong and popular inside Egypt as he claims to be, he should be able—by energetic propaganda and resolute police precautions—to accomplish the somersault convincingly. His biggest obstacle would be the hotheaded younger elements in the army—but even they are not unaware of Israeli prowess. Should the domestic perils of agreement to treat with Israel seem too formidable to Nasser, he would still have the choice of gradual retreat on the blockade and on other specific acts of belligerency. Such retreat could be covered by a noisy brandishing of arms to save face at home. Israel would certainly not mind the words as long as the deeds were satisfactory.

But, obviously, if no such satisfaction were given, then Israel would be compelled to move. Otherwise it would be *her* bluff that would be called. And obviously, her move would have to be larger than the usual "punitive" raid with limited attack and quick withdrawal. The move would have to be of sufficient size to force Egypt's compliance with her own pledges. This could very easily become the spark to a full-scale Arab-Israeli war—and this is where the spokesmen of independent Israeli action have to face up to the full consequences of the line they propose. No competent military observer doubts that Israel would win such a war, but there is more than that to it.

Nobody is more aware than the advocates, Israeli and non-Israeli, of this course of action that to contemplate war as a last resort to bring about an Arab-Israeli "settlement" sounds shocking and brutal. It is not the kind of proposal customarily made by enlightened people—certainly not in this era. But it must be understood that the advocates of a showdown with Egypt believe the alternative to it may be considerably more dreadful. If the Arabs continue their unrestricted arming against Israel and their diplomatic blackmail of the West, sooner or later the question will cease to be one of war or peace but simply of the date and dimension of the inevitable war. The later the decision, the weaker the Israelis (which also means the West) vis-à-vis the Arabs and the bloodier the ultimate struggle. The longer the present trend is permitted, the stronger the Soviets will grow in the Middle East, and the wider the boundaries of the eventual conflict.

But should Israel let herself be put in the position of fighting the West's battles single-handed? No responsible Israeli statesman has suggested that Israel be used in such a manner. Yet few sectors of Israeli opinion would find the idea unacceptable. To most Israelis, pulling the West's chestnuts from the fire would seem only incidental. Israel and the West have an identical degree of interest in ending the present Arab-Soviet threats. The proposed line of action, it is felt, would afford Israel release from an actual pressure and a prospective disaster that have already become nearly intolerable for her citizens to contemplate.

Two months ago—it is further argued—it might have been objected that Britain would never consent to drastic anti-Arab action. But Britain has gone a long way since Jordan gave Sir John Bagot Glubb his walking papers. The British are fighting

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mad at Egypt for having largely instigated that move, and for other "anti-imperialist" acts on her part. They have been reported even ready to employ their troops in Jordan in the event of a further major effort to destroy British influence there. This is a spectacular toughening of attitude for a government which only a year ago talked itself into giving away the Suez Canal. The British, it is said in Israel and elsewhere, have not yet taken the full cure for that tropical disease of which the most sinister symptom is confidence in the pledge of Arab leaders; they still, for example, have illusions about Iraqi fidelity. But at this precise moment in their re-education, it is quite possible that they would cooperate in a plan to cut Nasser down to size by cancellation of the Tripartite Declaration.

The French, too, have suffered some rude revelations. Only last November a highly placed Frenchman in Cairo advised me ponderously that France "is in effect an Islamic power because of our great holdings in Moslem North Africa; we must therefore have an independent, and most careful, policy toward other Islamic powers such as Egypt." Today the French are so aroused about Algeria and so furious over Egyptian meddling in "Moslem North Africa" that they are inclined to be much less "careful" in treating with Nasser. And it is argued that, even if they and the British recoiled from annuling the guarantee outright, the United States could bring about the same result by withdrawing of her own accord; with the major partner gone, the Tripartite Declaration would lapse. If in a subsequent confrontation between Israel and the Arabs the United States remained aloof, it is most improbable that either Britain or France would choose to intervene unilaterally.

THE only really valid objection anticipated by proponents of the idea of a direct Arab-Israeli settlement is a simple but effective one. It is not, they feel, going to happen, because the United States—or at least the Eisenhower administration and the present State Department—will not permit it to happen.

Who would have dreamed the day would come, as it now has, when the British would be cocking a fist at the Arabs—and raging at the Americans, of all people, for seeming to play a devious game on the Arab side. Shades of Ernest Bevin and Harry Truman! Washington has become the bizarre champion of Arab sensibilities, while London, classic and indefatigable wooer of Arabs, has at last had its eyes opened to the hopelessness of it all.

The cumulative evidence that appeasement of the Arabs has only fanned their ardor for Moscow has not induced the State Department to change its course. There are risks in any policy of showdown with Nasser. These are the only risks the Department apparently can visualize. A blind Departmental eye is turned toward the greater risks that other observers foresee in a policy that avoids any crisis with the Arabs, which would then lead inevitably to greater disaster. It is easier to sit in a bus careening downhill out of control than to crawl through the window and jump.

The State Department at this moment does not even dare "offend" the Arabs to the extent of selling Israel a single airplane. Cancellation of the Tripartite Declaration is thus most unlikely under present circumstances. Nevertheless, discussion of such a move here serves to illuminate, as if by a lightning flash, the fact that Western policy today pinions Israel's arms behind her back while the Cairo junta, fed with Soviet weapons, looks forward to the time when it will be able to obliterate Israel at a blow.

The leaders of Israel—let there be no doubt about this—would have great moral and practical scruples against launching on an independent course that risks war, and they are, moreover, anxious not to forfeit the world's good opinion. Yet the largest evil which can befall any community is its annihilation—and survival is a moral value, too. If a stage is reached where the distance between Israel and destruction becomes even narrower than at present, diplomatic and other considerations will become secondary to the well-nigh supreme one of survival. The Arabs make

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no secret of *their* intentions. As recently as last month the official Cairo newspaper *Al Goumhouriya* advised Secretary Hammarskjold that peace was impossible until Israel ceased to exist.

Should the safeguarding of her life and freedom force Israel to call the Arab bluff on her own, what would be the gravest obstacle to victory? The might and majesty of the Arab armies? Hardly—if the war came before Egypt could bring the full force of her new armaments to bear. The major impediment would be the sanctions which the powers might impose on Israel as an "aggressor." Total censure, economic penalties, paralyzing blockade are all conceivable. These could drive Israel back to her point of take-off and despoil her of any advantage gained from battle. Armed intervention might even be employed, with sufficient speed to halt and repulse the Israeli forces before the issue could be decided in the field. In the clash, Israel would emerge sapped spiritually and physically, with her ultimate security more jeopardized than ever, and her moral credit gone.

The prospect is more than sobering to the Israelis, and also to their friends. If some Israelis can contemplate it as possible, if not imminent, it is only because the inaction of the West, with the State Department giving the cues, is allowing their country to drift into a most desperate situation. The simple truth is that Israel cannot accept a position of inferior strength in the face of neighbors sworn to her destruction. Until the threat of being reduced to such a position is eliminated, counsels of desperation (which seem less desperate than their alternative) will receive more and more of a hearing from Israelis.

MEANWHILE it is all-important—and here I speak for myself and my own assessment of the situation—that Israel's cause be better presented to the American public than it has been so far. The Israelis—all the Arab propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding—have not shown themselves adept at public relations. More important, neither have the several American organizations and the numerous American friends of Israel working energetically to present her case. Otherwise, the dangerous impression might not have arisen that it is the Israelis, and not the Arabs, who are the chronic aggressors—and that aid to Israel would hurt American interests in the Middle East.

Two things need to be brought home to American public opinion by friends of democracy in the Middle East. First, Washington's negative *behavior* toward Israel (as distinguished from Washington's pious *declarations*) is strengthening the Arabs militarily and encouraging them to believe that they may launch an all-out blitz—and get away with it—just as soon as they feel confident enough of a crushing superiority in arms and alliances. Second, the one way to salvage the Western position in the Middle East—and avoid loss of the area to the Soviet—is to reverse the present State Department policy of Arab appeasement.

Western diplomatic timidity towards Nasser and his allies will only encourage them further into the Soviet embrace. Advocates of Israel's security must lift themselves out of their rut of special pleading and shopworn slogans: these can no longer convince or persuade. Nor are they pertinent. Aid to Israel is not the paramount point. It is aid to the United States that matters now. The State Department, in effect, is telling Americans that the Arabs must be placated or else the United States is threatened. Let Americans be told instead that the State Department's present policy of appeasement will only destroy American security in the Middle East.

This is the truth: that *only a resolute confrontation of the Arabs will help America.* One vital element of such a confrontation is American support of Israel's right to security and peace. Not for Israel's sake, but for America's.

[*This is the third of a series of articles by Mr. Lehrman based on his recent tour of the Arab states and Israel. A fourth article will follow.*]

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THE MOSCOW-CAIRO AXIS

Its Aim: To Drive the West Out

WALTER Z. LAQUEUR

EVER since the Communist-Egyptian arms deal in the autumn of 1955, there has been an unaccustomed, busy traffic of delegations to and from the Soviet bloc and the Arab countries, pledging undying friendship and (from the Soviet side) all kinds of economic aid. The Soviet Union has agreed to install Egypt's first nuclear laboratory; Hungary is going to build new bridges across the Nile; Bulgaria will carry out construction work in Alexandria harbor. The East Germans will be drilling for water in the Sudan, the Czechs are going to construct oil refineries in Syria, the Poles a new railroad in Saudi Arabia. Soviet engineers are already busy in Yemen and Lebanon, and the Poles have received a bid to build steel plants in Egypt. In the last few months, China has become the single most important buyer of Egyptian cotton. This list could be prolonged indefinitely.

On the political level, the Soviet Union has established relations with Libya and the Sudan, renewed her ties with Yemen, and considerably strengthened her diplomatic representation throughout the Middle East. The other Communist countries are following suit. At the recent 20th Party Congress, Molotov ate humble pie for not having paid proper attention, until recently, to the chances for extending Soviet influence in the Middle East. But it would be difficult to charge his ministry with neglect of such opportunities now: Gamal Abdel Nasser is to visit Russia and Eastern Europe in the near future, and Khrushchev and Bulganin will return the visit some time this year.

Meanwhile "cultural exchange," too, has been going forward at a merry pace. Cairo and Damascus have been swamped with East European ballet groups, Soviet films, Hungarian football players, and Bulgarian and Czech cyclists (competing in the "Tour d'Egypte"). The Cairo Opera has been taken over these last few months by four folklore ballet groups from Eastern Europe and the ensemble of the Peking opera. Dozens of exhibitions have been arranged and many new periodicals have appeared, all in the cause of Soviet-Arab collaboration.

Open at random any of the mass-circulation Egyptian weeklies such as *Rose-al Yusuf* or *At Tahrir* and you will find articles by or on the "Red Dean" of Canterbury, by Ilya Ehrenburg, excerpts from the writings of Mao Tse-tung, Stalin, and Khrushchev, articles on the position of women in the New China, reports on a visit to a Soviet atomic power station, and little else—apart, of course, from the routine attacks on Israel and "Western colonialism," and the usual Cairo society gossip. Since December last, the Cairo and Damascus radios have been re-broadcasting Tass bulletins and Moscow radio talks in Arabic.

AN INTERESTING feature of the Communist wooing of the Arabs is the wide use made of Soviet and Chinese representatives of Moslem origin. Quoting the Koran, Burhan-al-Shadid (described as "head of the Chinese Moslem community") made an excellent impression in Cairo. Lebanese

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COMMUNIST machinations are not the sole cause of the Middle Eastern crisis, but it would certainly lack its present urgency without them, as WALTER Z. LAQUEUR shows. A frequent contributor to these pages, Mr. Laqueur was until recently a political commentator on the Israeli radio, and is now on a prolonged stay in England. Born in Breslau, Germany, in 1921, he went to Palestine in 1938. His last previous appearance in COMMENTARY was with "The Kastner Case" (December 1955).

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cabinet ministers were enthusiastic in their praise of Miss Allah Solenkova's songs in Arabic (Solenkova is a member of the Leningrad Opera House). Western artists—the Dublin Gate Theater company, for instance, which was in Egypt in February—may offer more accomplished performances but cannot touch the same emotional chords. Religion, too, has been brought into play: for the first time ever the Soviet radio made a live broadcast from the Tashkent mosque in January 1956; and the new Soviet Armenian Patriarch, Vazgen I, was sent on a tour of duty through the Middle East.

More important still, the Soviet experts, shrewdly appraising the enormous vanity of most Arab politicians, have flattered and cajoled them to an extent unprecedented even by Levantine standards—and with considerable success. Egypt, with its glorious past, its heroic people, its superb culture, its selfless, progressive, hard-working, gifted, dynamic leadership, is daily lauded to the skies, and the other Arab countries receive similar treatment. All this has delighted the Arabs. Every day it becomes more obvious that Western economic help alone cannot have an equal political impact; fifty silk ties brought back as gifts by Egyptian journalists from a visit to China impressed Cairo public opinion far more—and certainly made a bigger splash in the press—than the United States' fifty million dollars for the Aswan High Dam.

Another important means of extending Soviet influence is rumor-mongering. Two recent examples should suffice as illustrations. The Damascus radio reported on March 11 that the Soviet government had decided to send Soviet Moslem warriors to take part in the impending holy war against Israel. *Rose-al Yusuf* of Cairo authoritatively announced on March 5 the resumption of anti-Jewish trials throughout the Eastern bloc. There is no reason to think that either of these reports is true, but those who spread such rumors know that it will make Arab listeners and readers "feel good" at least for a few days—and then the "news" will have been forgotten anyway, or superseded by some new rumor. The credulity of Arab public opinion, stimulated and helped along by the Arab governments, is apparently boundless. And the Communists know it.

Yet it must be doubted whether all the economic and political infiltration, the visits of ballet troupes and sports teams, the extravagant praise and the false rumors, are really as important as some Western observers make them out. The impact of even such a concentrated propaganda onslaught is not lasting. What really counts is the fact that the two blocs, Soviet and Arab, have now plainly embarked on a common course of action aimed at driving the West out of the Middle East and Africa. The present rulers of Egypt want big-power status for their country and Egyptian supremacy in Africa and the Middle East. Moscow, of course, doesn't give a hoot about Egyptian ambitions except as they help to embroil the Arab world with the West. Even if Nasser's drive proves unsuccessful, the result will be conflict between the Arabs and the West. On the other hand, the Soviet leaders have nothing to fear from the emergence of a new Middle Eastern-African empire headed by the Cairo junta—such a colossus, if it ever arose, which is highly unlikely, would have feet of clay.

Meanwhile Nasser promises to continue useful to Moscow for some years to come. In the age of atomic stalemate small countries can bluff and browbeat big powers and get away with it—provided they are impudent enough. Nasser has learned this lesson and can be relied upon to act on it until somebody calls his bluff. Considering what Western policy is like at present, both Moscow and Nasser are probably justified in thinking that day still far off.

UNTIL recently, the immediate goal of Soviet policy in the Middle East had been to prevent the establishment of a Middle Eastern defense organization collaborating with the West. By the end of 1955 this goal had largely been achieved: only one Arab country, Iraq, had joined

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the Baghdad Pact, and even in Iraq, according to many observers, there is substantial opposition to this move, so that Iraq's adherence to the pact is not likely to outlast the present government of Nuri Said.

Soviet policy-makers have therefore been able to begin aiming at the next objectives in their campaign to eliminate Western influence from the Middle East: the dismantling of Western military bases (in Jordan, Iraq, Saudia, Libya, and elsewhere) and, perhaps even more important, the cutting off of the West from Middle Eastern oil. This last may turn out to be the main issue in the struggle now going on for the Middle East. Moscow has not been oversanguine lately about the possibility of an "automatic breakdown" of Western Europe as the result of an economic crisis or political disintegration; nevertheless, highly industrialized Western Europe, which gets 75 per cent of its oil from the Middle East, would be well-nigh fatally affected by the stoppage of oil deliveries from that area.

For some months now Middle Eastern oil has apparently been much on the minds of Soviet leaders. Khrushchev spoke about its importance for the West in a recent meeting with the Labor MP, Harold Wilson; and there was a highly significant passage in Anastas I. Mikoyan's speech at the 20th Party Congress which, for some reason or other, has been overlooked by most observers. He said: "In the Middle East in 1955, the United States and British oil monopolies took out 150 million tons of oil at a total cost of 240 million dollars. This is fabulously cheap. The net profit they made on this oil amounted to 1.9 billion dollars—one year's return covered the entire capital investment in that area. In Kuwait, for instance, their profits for one quarter-year equaled all the capital invested during the entire period. The U. S. oil industry would require at least six to seven years to get back its capital investment. If all the income earned from oil were to remain with its legitimate owners, the Arab and other peoples of the Middle East, how speedily might not these peoples abolish poverty and go forward with their economic and cultural development, which has been retarded for years by the ruthless exploitation of the foreign capitalists."

The theme of imperialist exploitation has since mid-February been sounded in countless variations by Soviet propaganda aimed at the Middle East. It has also been taken up by Egypt in its propaganda broadcasts to the Arab world—not that Egypt needed much prodding in this direction. Take the following broadcast over the Cairo radio on March 6, 1956: "The Arab rulers granted the exploiting imperialist companies a host of rights and concessions at the expense of the people struggling against them. The Arabs allow the crude oil to go to the countries of their enemies and colonizers. We do not want U. S. dollars, British pounds, French francs, or Dutch guilders. . . . O Arabs, our oil is plundered by aliens, it is seized by your enemy. Remember oil, our lost wealth! Oil is for the Arabs!"

In the contest between Moscow and the West for the Middle East, the Soviet position on the oil question seems strong, the Western one woefully weak. The Soviet leaders, to begin with, appear as disinterested onlookers: Middle Eastern oil is no vital concern of theirs, they have got along without it, and can go on doing so at least for some time to come. And so their advice to the Arab countries to withhold their oil from the West seems entirely altruistic—there is no direct economic gain for them in the West's loss. If the West should make difficulties, the Soviets stand ready to help by providing experts or machinery or by buying Arab oil themselves.

The Western position seems basically weak because of Western European dependence on Middle Eastern oil, the record of the Western oil companies, and the use that oil royalties have been put to in the past by the Middle Eastern governments. There is not much point in going into Mikoyan's facts and figures, which are hardly exact. But they do contain some truth. The profits of the American oil

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companies in the Persian Gulf area rose from $115 million in 1947 to $300 million in 1951, and have probably trebled again since then. They have enjoyed a fabulous return of something like 500 per cent per barrel. In Iran, during the Mussadegh crisis when oil production was at a standstill, the Anglo-Iranian oil company was still able to pay a dividend of 30 per cent.

WHAT Mikoyan did not mention, however, was how much the governments of Arab oil-producing countries were paid this year, and have been paid over recent years, in revenues from oil industries developed with Western capital, management, equipment, and initiative. Here is the table of expected oil revenues for 1956 for the following governments:

Iran	(approx.) $100	million
Iraq	260	"
Kuwait	315	"
Saudi Arabia	300	"

What will be done with all this money? In what ways will the native populations benefit from it? Mikoyan kept quiet about the share the Arab regimes got of the oil profits. Moscow does not want to offend them at the moment. But to answer these questions is to provide cold comfort to the West, for the record of the Arab regimes' waste and greed can be made to look like a part of the irresponsibility of the American and British oil companies.

Let us leave Iran aside and go on to Iraq—it appears that about 70 per cent of the Iraqi oil income is officially allotted to various development schemes which may ultimately benefit the Iraqi national economy. It is only too well known, however, that much of this revenue will in fact find its way into the pockets of leading sheikhs and notables. Indeed, the majority of the Iraqi population is likely to *suffer* as a result of the inflation that has already followed the influx of so much money into the country.

Tocqueville once said that bad governments are never more in danger than when resolving to mend their ways. After giving the Iraqi development schemes all due credit, it would appear wildly optimistic to expect them to have any stabilizing political effect in the near future. On the contrary, resentment against the government and the oil companies, fanned by Communist and nationalist propaganda, is likely to grow.

The story of Saudian oil need not be repeated in detail. More than four-fifths of the oil revenues are used to meet the whims of the King and his swollen family and to extend his prestige abroad—by buying newspapers, Syrian and Lebanese politicians, members of the Jordanian royal entourage, by paying Communist and nationalist rabble-rousers everywhere throughout the Middle East (except, of course, at home). The tastes of the King have become expensive over the years, and the bribes more substantial; the result is that Saudia is heavily overdrawn—the Chase National Bank had to advance it $150 million the other day. One wonders what King Sa'ud's Western financiers think about the political effects of their loans—if indeed they give any thought in that direction. "*Après nous le deluge*" may be their motto—or perhaps they think blackmail is preferable to the King's seeking Soviet assistance. In any case it is a safe prediction that this unedifying spectacle will not go on indefinitely.

The Amir of Kuwait (the country producing the most oil right now) is a prudent man; he does not keep Jordanian queen mothers, Egyptian poets, or Communist agitators on his payroll. Instead he has built a number of hospitals and schools in his amirate and improved the roads. In addition, he is said to have a balance of about $600 million in a British bank.*

It is easy to see how Communist and Arab nationalist propaganda could have a field day in these circumstances. Still, there are some serious difficulties in the way of the Communist and Egyptian goal of cutting the West off from Middle Eastern oil.

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*See Ray Alan's "Stirrings in Araby" (April).

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EGYPT and Syria, the main pillars of the pro-Eastern Arab bloc, are not among the main oil producers. Egypt could close the Suez Canal and Red Sea to Western ships—such a move was recently threatened in Cairo's *Al Mussawar* of March 9. (Israel, it is argued in Egypt, has to be eliminated in this connection alone, since she would afford the West an outlet on the Red Sea.) Syria could cut off the pipeline which runs from the Iraqi oilfields to the Lebanese coast, and this too has been threatened. But such moves would not bring Middle Eastern oil production to a standstill; most of the oil is shipped in tankers from the Persian Gulf, and 80 per cent or more of it could be brought round the Cape of Good Hope.

Which means that Soviet and Egyptian policy-makers have to tackle the matter of cutting off oil to the West right at the well-heads. And the way to do this is by agitating for nationalization. The cry for nationalization of Middle Eastern oil could be raised until it reached a pitch like that in Iran in 1951. The nationalization demand could be pushed most successfully in Iraq, where it coincides with the general nationalist drive against the Baghdad Pact and the Nuri Said government. Kuwait, a British protectorate, has no national opposition movement now, but one could be worked up soon enough, as was shown by the recent riots in neighboring Bahrain. The situation is more complicated in Saudia: King Sa'ud is an ally of the Egyptians and has received good marks in Moscow. The Egyptian leaders certainly don't want to see him thrown out now. But the Communists, of course, will oppose him in the long run, and may not find it too difficult to get rid of him in a few years' time. A political opposition has come up in Saudia in the last year or so, with its mainstay in a small, recently emerged middle class that is hostile to the medieval regime and has the elements of a "mass following" among the oilfield workers. This opposition is small and unorganized as yet, but then the ruling group is even smaller.

It was already fairly obvious by autumn 1955 that the Cairo junta could not go on very long praising the Communist parties of China and Russia while denouncing their home-grown species. And indeed since then they have modified their attitude to their own Communists considerably. Khaled Bakhdash, head of the Syrian Communist party, and the leading Communist of the Middle East, has been feted in Cairo and elsewhere lately. On his return from Egypt he wrote a series of articles in a Syrian paper, *Al Ra'i al A'am*, in which he put the stamp of his approval on Nasser's regime. There is no legal Communist newspaper in Egypt as yet, but writings by Soviet and Chinese leaders are currently published in Arabic by the leading periodicals of the country (like *Rose-al Yusuf*), which makes a separate Communist press almost unnecessary.

The Egyptian Communist movement itself has been split for the last fifteen years (DMNL [Democratic Movement for National Liberation], the main faction, is now strongly in favor of Nasser and his regime, whereas some minority factions still oppose him), but Nasser's junta includes prominent fellow-travelers like Gamal Salem, Deputy Prime Minister, and Fathi Ridwan, Minister of Propaganda in the cabinet. Ridwan, who helped to found Egypt's fascist party twenty years ago, subsequently became a leading "partisan of peace" and headed (*inter alia*) the Egyptian delegation to the Communist "Conference of Peoples" in Vienna in 1953. Many more examples could be given of the success of Communist infiltration in Egypt, not only in the government party, but also in the officer corps and other influential organizations.

But Syria is where the Communists are really making hay. For there they count among their well-wishers a majority of the members in the army's high command. This is one of the results of the Communist alliance with the left-wing nationalist Republican Socialist party, which has traditionally had a big military following. A minority of the Republican Socialists headed

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by Michel Aflaq, an ex-Communist, opposed this close cooperation, but his rivals won out and as a result a rather anomalous situation now prevails. Though officially the Syrian Communist party remains illegal, the army's chief of staff sends letters of congratulation to the party's leader, Bakhdash, that are duly reported in the press. Syrian Communists have founded, or bought, a considerable number of daily and weekly newspapers, among which *At Talia* and *An Nur* are the most prominent. A newly founded cultural periodical, *As Thaqafa al watania,* is Communist, too, and reflects their hold on most Syrian professional organizations, including the writers', lawyers', and teachers' associations, etc., etc.

Communist infiltration of Syria has reached such a scale that Soviet propaganda in Arabic has lately felt obliged to play it down so as not to stir up counter-forces. And, with a modesty unprecedented among Communist leaders, Khaled Bakhdash, in a recent article in Moscow's *Pravda* (March 11, 1956), argued that Communist influence in the Middle East was more imaginary than real.

But Egypt matters far more than Syria, and in Egypt, as in most other Arab countries, the unwitting help given to the Soviet Union is of far greater importance than the conscious efforts of crypto-Communists, however highly placed. Colonel Nasser solemnly proclaims that his policy has been, and will remain, a neutral one; he explained the Soviet arms deal as a one-time commercial transaction forced upon him by the unwillingness of the Western powers to supply Egypt with the weapons she needed to defend herself against Israeli attack. It is not impossible that Nasser really believed that at the time, and in meetings with Western visitors he has reiterated his interest in Western, especially American, friendship. Unfortunately, his actions do not square with these words. Declarations he has made to the Communist press (such as the message of congratulations he sent to the World Communist Students movement [IUS]) and an interview he gave the correspondent of a Bulgarian paper) contain some of the clues to his real intentions.*

In effect, Nasser has each month swerved further from his professed neutralism. Egypt's state-controlled press and radio make no critical remarks whatsoever about the Soviet world, whereas morning and night they fulminate wildly against the West. Things have gone so far that the Soviet press, in reprinting articles from Egyptian publications (as it occasionally does nowadays), feels obliged to omit some of the most offensive anti-Western expressions.

Nasser, like President Kuwatli of Syria, seems to believe in all earnest that he can make the Arab League a world power by playing off West against East, and vice versa. This illusion is undoubtedly based on bona fide Arab nationalism as well as on the time-honored Levantine belief that all foreigners are easy to outwit (though Nasser and Kuwatli exploit Arab nationalism for their own ends, too). Yet, whatever Nasser's original intentions, things have moved beyond them; he has set going forces over which he has lost control and, a prisoner of his own slogans, can only continue in power by moving in an increasingly anti-Western direction.

It would be quite wrong to attribute all these developments, as gratifying as they may be to Moscow, to the clever machinations of Soviet diplomacy. Arab nationalism is quite different from that of Pakistan, India, Burma, or Indonesia. The main desire of the national movements in the latter countries, once independence has been achieved, is domestic reform. The main desire of Arab nationalism, once its immediate

*In an interview with him that appeared in the Sofia *Rabotnichesko Dyelo* (February 24, 1956) Nasser said "that the Egyptian people admire the Bulgarians for their courage in the Second World War against fascism." Bulgaria, it will be remembered, did not take a conspicuous part in that war, and Nasser and most of the other members of his regime were at the time either followers of Egypt's fascist party, or, in any case, were fervently hoping for victory for the Nazis.

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aims have been achieved, is to extend its sway, to seek political and military prestige, and great-power status. Arab nationalism, spearheaded by Egypt, is trying to establish a new empire embracing the continent of Africa and the Middle East right up to Pakistan.* It is the pursuit of this goal that has brought Egypt into conflict with the West.

Perhaps the conflict would not have broken out so soon if not for the Soviet drive in the Middle East in 1955, but it would be quite wrong to think that Soviet policy has *created* anti-Westernism among the Arabs. Moscow woke up to the fact that it could use this movement for its own ends only rather belatedly, when it was already in full swing.

There is a good reason to think that Moscow's aims in the Middle East will conform to those of the Egyptian-Syrian axis for some time to come. The foreign policies of these countries are what count in Soviet eyes, not their internal regimes, the Soviet assumption being that in a long-range view both countries are headed towards Communism anyhow, with their present governments inadvertently leading the way. All the evidence indicates that no Communist coups are in prospect, since a premature Communist victory in any one Middle Eastern country would probably have a boomerang effect in the others.

In these circumstances, Moscow lays particular stress on the activities of "front organizations," which in the Middle East have for some time now been of much greater political importance than the local Communist parties. Such fronts now exist in virtually all the professions, with their representatives meeting every few months in one of the Arab capitals. (The lawyers, for instance, met in Cairo in March; in Damascus early this year the formation of an "all-Arab workers organization" was mooted; the "progressive writers" are permanently in session.) Front organizations have the great advantage of being able to act—sometimes even with government support—in countries such as Egypt where the Communist party itself is outlawed. At their conferences, anti-Western and anti-colonial resolutions are adopted, but no specifically Communist domestic demands seem ever to be made.

There is even some reason to assume that Moscow has had to restrain its over-zealous friends in the Middle East in their eagerness to attack the governments in power, lest the present "unity of action" which Moscow so highly prizes be disrupted. Such seems to have been the case in the Sudan after the recent Kosti outrage when the Communists and other opposition groups demanded the resignation of the government, and in Syria when Damascus students demonstrated in March against a government that had proved incompetent to cope with the internal crisis. But such incidents apart, the community of interests between Cairo-Damascus and Moscow seems to be a firm one, and there appears to be no reason to expect Arab-Soviet collaboration to come to an early end.

THE Soviet bloc's neutral attitude towards Israel has waned over the last twelve months in the same measure that its co-operation with the Arab world has waxed. Israel is invariably described as an "aggressor" attacking her peace-loving Arab neighbors; and the Moscow press and radio, as a matter of principle, carry only Arab accounts of Arab-Israeli border strife. Chinese Communist leaders have compared Israel with Formosa (according to the Egyptian press), implying that an Arab attack against Israel would not even be a war but merely a police action, an internal affair of the Arab states. At the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist party, the "fascization" of Israel was mentioned—a term applied to no other country. It was one of those funny coincidences which happen in world politics that the one and only country this side of the Iron Curtain that has an all-socialist cabinet in which a party subscribing to the

*See again Ray Alan's "Stirrings in Araby" in last month's issue.

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tenets of Marxism-Leninism is represented should be charged with turning reactionary and fascist!

But again, as with Arab nationalism's anti-Western drive, it is no good blaming the Communists alone for this state of affairs. The Soviets' anti-Israeli line was hesitant at first; only when it was realized in Moscow that there would be no sharp reaction from Israel herself did it become more outspoken. Israel should have reacted vigorously to every anti-Israeli move on the part of the Soviets from the very first. Even a small country can compel Moscow to modify its policy if it shows some nerve; the success of Finland's stand in 1939, and of Tito's in 1948, are cases in point. There is evidence that the Communists have felt uneasy about the effect of their anti-Israeli policy in the West and the fateful historical parallel people might draw from it.*

In Israel it was believed apparently that the country's delicate international position made it imprudent for her to offend the Soviet Union. But the Soviet leaders, like the Arab ones, tend to be impressed only by boldness and determination; hesitancy, the desire to hush things up and seek agreement behind the scenes, has no effect on them whatsoever. Mapam, Israel's fellow-traveling Socialist party, has been negotiating behind the scenes for three years now to get one of its members, Mordecai Oren, out of a Czech jail. The result is that the Marxist-Leninist Oren continues to languish there, whereas most of the people who were jailed with him have been freed.

Irritation at Western policy towards Israel, on the other hand, has occasionally produced rather unrealistic ideas and suggestions in the Israeli press. *Davar*, the Histadrut organ, remarked the other day, with wonderful naivety, that it had never been able to understand why Russia failed to appreciate progressive and peace-loving Israel. A political correspondent in *Ha'aretz* came up very wide-eyed with the suggestion that if Israel did not get support from the West, it might be able to obtain a Soviet guarantee of the status quo in the Middle East. Such utterances show only too clearly the fallacies underlying much Israeli think-

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*Soviet policy on Israel and the Soviet attitude towards East European Jewry have been sharply criticized from opposite quarters in recent weeks. The extreme nationalist groups in Syria and Egypt have taken the position that the Soviet leaders' "moderate" anti-Jewish line is not enough. After all, more spectacular things, such as new mass trials of Jews, etc., etc., had been promised. The Damascus newspaper *Al Kabas* reported a great demonstration against the head of the Syrian Communists following his return from Moscow; several hundred students are said to have petitioned the Syrian Chamber of Deputies to remove him from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Why? Because Bakhdash took part in the 20th Party Congress in Moscow along with Communist delegates from Israel. The latter, though they defamed Israel and the Jews, remain Jews in the eyes of the Syrian semi-fascists, and Jews have to be exterminated. All this means that the Arab Communists, who cannot let themselves be outdone by any potential rivals in the nationalist movement, are under pressure to adopt an even more anti-Jewish line than the present one. At the World Peace Council in Stockholm, they vied with the extreme nationalists in offering anti-Jewish (not just anti-Israel) slogans.

But there has been a lot of criticism of this recently from the other side; the West European press has been full of it. With Khrushchev and Bulganin visiting England, and a greater sensitivity in general to foreign opinion evident in Moscow, it can be assumed that the Soviet leaders are not unconcerned about the effects of the "moderate" anti-Jewish line on the West. The fact that only Slansky, whose trial had a pronounced anti-Semitic character, remains unrehabilitated among the old "criminals of Titoism," for the obvious reason that he was a Jew, has made a bad impression even on French fellow-travelers, who are not easily shocked. The arrest of Jews in the Soviet Union for possessing Hebrew or Yiddish newspapers, the hostile Soviet attitude to Israel, and other indications have provoked doubts in the British press as to the sincerity of the "retreat from Stalinism." In the United States, even the *Daily Worker* has criticized the persecution of Jews inside the Soviet world.

There are already clear signs that the Soviet leaders do not relish paying for their popularity with the Arab extremists by a bad press in the West. The excuses they make haven't improved matters any: "We are not against the Jews in general. Israel yes, but Israel is a different matter. . . . The rights of Russian and satellite Jews? A purely internal problem. . . ." Soviet "Jewish policy," in short, is in a state of flux, with the Arab extremists pulling hard in one direction and Western public opinion in the other. It will be interesting to see what the outcome is.

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ing about the sources of the present Middle Eastern crisis. American unwillingness to help Israel springs, after all, largely—though not exclusively—from the very fear of being outmaneuvered by the Russians in the Middle East.

I DO not intend here to outline a policy for the West vis-à-vis the new Moscow-Cairo axis. The general tendency in the West to let things drift is no great surprise. Why should we expect the West to show initiative and leadership in the Middle East when it has not done so elsewhere? Two general observations are nevertheless in order: one is that the situation has become far too critical to leave any policy-making to the oil companies with their rivalries and narrow, conflicting interests. If the West does not want to see every barrel of Middle Eastern oil go whistling down the Eastern wind, the whole matter of oil policy must be placed under the control and direction of an intergovernmental board with full authority. This may of course be an extreme measure, but extreme measures are called for if there is to be no catastrophe.

Secondly, it should be clear that firmness alone can have an effect on the Cairo-Damascus axis. Probably nowhere else in the world is there more adulation of the strong and contempt for the weak than among Arabs. Russia is esteemed and feared because she is strong, America is held in scant respect because nobody really needs to be afraid of her.

The rulers of Egypt and Syria do not, after all, want to become junior partners in the Soviet bloc; they will change their tune fast enough and drop much of their present intransigence if only the West forcefully expresses its displeasure with their present course. Whenever Colonel Nasser has faced a determined, inflexible opponent he has proved very reasonable indeed: the Cairo junta retreated ignominiously when Adenauer made it clear that he would go ahead with West German reparations to Israel regardless of Arab threats. Nasser retreated when the Sudan stood up against his campaign for its merger with Egypt. He has proved reasonable on other occasions and may prove so again, provided one chooses the right way to approach him.

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FREUD'S MOTHER AND FATHER

A Memoir

JUDITH BERNAYS HELLER

BEFORE embarking upon an account of my impressions of Sigmund Freud's parents, who were my own maternal grandfather and grandmother, it might be well to give some account of myself.

My life from the age of six on has swung back and forth between the Old World and the New. It started when my father and mother left me and my younger sister Lucy behind in our native city of Vienna, while they, accompanied by our younger brother Edward, emigrated to the United States. There, Father hoped to find better conditions in which to establish himself. My sister was left with our aunt and uncle, and I in the care of our maternal grandparents, the father and mother of Sigmund Freud, my mother's brother.

We were sent for a year later, and traveled to the United States under the protection of one of Mother's sisters, Aunt Paula. Mother received regular news of her brothers and sisters. She would describe Vienna to us with a kind of nostalgia that endowed it with glamor. As a matter of fact, the first money that I ever earned—teaching in the New York public schools for several years—I spent on a trip to Europe. But even before that, Mother had taken all five of us children abroad to visit our grandparents on both sides—the Freuds and the Bernayses, and we had come to know our cousins, the children of Sigmund Freud and of my mother's sisters.

During my first journey on my own, I spent weeks in the Freud home. Then the First World War separated us for four long years. When I returned to Vienna in 1921, it was like coming back to a second home. Again I stayed with the Freuds, and was proud to be permitted to translate three of my uncle's papers into English; these were published in 1924 by the Hogarth Press in London, as part of the International Psychoanalytical Library. Then, when I married an Austrian economist, Dr. Victor Heller, Vienna became my home once more, which did not displease me.

Subsequently, I journeyed back to the United States several times to see my family and to renew my American citizenship, which I prized. And in 1938, with Hitler's annexation of Austria, I returned to this country for good, accompanied by my husband.

SIGMUND FREUD himself, as well as others, spoke about his father—in the *Interpretation of Dreams,* in his letters to Fliess, and in his autobiographical writings. It was my privilege as a child to be quite close for a time to this patriarchal figure, whose room I shared during the year that I remained in Vienna while my parents were establishing themselves in New York.

That was in 1892-93, when Sigmund

SIGMUND FREUD, born a hundred years ago on May 6, was the first to demonstrate the all-important influence of parents on the psychic life of people. It is entirely appropriate therefore that we should mark the occasion with a niece's memoir of Freud's parents that shows them—especially his mother—in a light rather different from that in which he (and his biographers) have let us see them. JUDITH BERNAYS HELLER is the daughter of Freud's sister Anna, who married Ely Bernays, who was himself the brother of Freud's wife Martha. Mrs. Heller was born in Vienna but has lived most of her life in this country. Educated at Barnard College, she taught for some years in the public schools of New York City. Her Austrian-born husband, Dr. Victor Heller, was a research economist with the Federal government until his death.

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Freud was living with his wife and four children in a modest apartment not far from my grandparents, with whom three grown daughters and their youngest son, just starting out with a newspaper, were still staying.

I cannot say who really supported this establishment. I do know that my grandfather was no longer working, but divided his time between reading the Talmud (in the original) at home, sitting in a coffee house, and walking in the parks. Occasionally, he took me with him, when the others were too busy to occupy themselves with me. Tall and broad, with a long beard, he was very kind and gentle, and humorous in the bargain—much more so than my grandmother, whom I really feared, though I admired her stateliness and the nice clothes she wore when she went out with her friends.

It seems to me, as I look back now, that Freud's father lived somewhat aloof from the others in his family, reading a great deal—German and Hebrew (not Yiddish)—and seeing his own friends away from home. He would come home for meals, but took no real part in the general talk of the others. It was not a pious household, but I do remember one Seder at which I, as the youngest at the table, had to make the responses to the reading of the song about the sacrifice of the kid; I was greatly impressed by the way my grandfather recited the ritual, and the fact that he knew it by heart amazed me. I liked, too, to hear the stories he would tell about my mother, who, as eldest daughter, seemed to have been his pet; he held her up to me as an example to follow.

But what I think struck me most about my maternal grandfather was how, in the midst of this rather emotional household, with its three young women who sometimes did not get on well with one another, and their mother, who was usually troubled and anxious—probably with financial worries—he remained quiet and imperturbable, not indifferent, but not disturbed, never out of temper and never raising his voice. My grandmother, on the other hand, had a volatile temperament, would scold the maid as well as her daughters, and rush about the house.

It was not a very spacious apartment. As I have said, I had to share my grandfather's bedroom; the three daughters, grown young women, shared one room with my grandmother, and the young son had a dark little room facing the court; while the maid, as was customary in Vienna at that time, slept on a folding cot that was opened up at night in the kitchen, I believe, while it stood in the hall under a cover in the daytime. I do not remember whether there was a bathroom in the place, but I know that I was usually washed by being stood in a basin and sponged down. The whole place was simpler and less comfortable in every way than my parents' home had been and, of course, it was not home, in spite of the kindness of my three young aunts and grandfather. I greatly envied my sister, who had been left in the Sigmund Freud household, where there were three boys and a girl to play with. When I was brought there so that we might play together once in a while, I hated to go back to my grandparents', where there were only grown-ups, among them my somewhat shrill and domineering grandmother.

I CANNOT remember any special incident that might account for the prejudice that I had and continued to have all my life against my grandmother. She was a fine-looking woman, efficient, and capable in the household, lively and sociable, much visited by friends, and loved and honored by her children until her death at ninety-five. Was it because I already felt as a child that she preferred the male members of her brood to the female ones? I did not get to know her really until many, many years later, when I returned to Austria as a young girl and spent the summer with one of my married aunts in Ischl, the resort where my grandmother kept house with the single unmarried daughter who had been designated by the family to stay and look after her. She was still handsome and upstanding then,

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with a fine head of gray hair that was combed *à la Pompadour* every morning by a hairdresser.

She had many friends and acquaintances and spent the afternoons playing cards with them at the coffee and tea "stations," as they were called, in the woods and villages around Ischl, then the summer residence of the Austrian emperor. My aunt, who did not play cards, would be forced to go with her, whether she liked it or not, and when I was around I would trot along, too, very unwillingly, for although I did not mind the walk, I hated just to sit around and watch the elderly ladies at their tarock or poker. I think my prejudice against cards was founded there and then.

My grandmother did not like us to go off by ourselves; at the time I thought that she was a most selfish old lady and altogether disapproved of her. And she no less of me. She could not take pride in a young girl who did not care to promenade in her best dress up and down the Esplanade while the band was playing; who preferred, instead, to spend her mornings in rough clothes, climbing round the rocks on the mountain paths, or sitting on hidden benches with her nose buried in some book that was surely not suitable for her. But she made no effort to discipline or change me; after all, was I not going back to New York in the fall, where such behavior might be proper? There was no mistaking her lack of interest in all that concerned me.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S delight in card-playing persisted throughout her life. In her nineties, when she had grown feeble and was no longer able to go out, her partners would come to the house for a game. She would play dominoes with her young grandsons and even a great-grandson, and be very angry if they did not play with concentration, or if they "let her win," as she said, out of deference to her age. She kept her interest in making a good appearance on appropriate occasions until almost the last year of her life. When there was a special invitation, as for instance to the celebration of my uncle Sigmund's seventieth birthday in 1926 (when she was already ninety), she insisted that she be bought a new dress and hat to go to the *Jause* (coffee party) at his house. She had to be carried down the stairs from her own home and up the stairs to the Freuds', but she did not mind that so long as she could be present to be honored and feted as the mother of her "golden son," as she called her Sigmund.

She was charming and smiling when strangers were about, but I, at least, always felt that with familiars she was a tyrant, and a selfish one. Quite definitely, she had a strong personality and knew what she wanted, and the best evidence of that is the way she held her two sons and five daughters together, in spite of all the divergences and differences in their interests and their temperaments. And she had a sense of humor, being able to laugh at, and at times even ridicule, herself. I remember her saying to me, when I was supposed to choose some present for myself from her cabinet, where she kept a few treasured antiques: "After all, the best antique in my house is myself, and me you cannot take." She was eighty-four at the time.

Among her other good qualities was the fact that she was not a complainer. You did not hear her bewail the privations and difficulties of the First World War; she did not groan about the weaknesses attendant on old age. Even when she broke her arm at eighty-five and had to give up her beloved crocheting and knitting, she did not waste time pitying herself, but praised the doctor, her children who had nursed her so patiently, and the friends who had come to help her pass the time.

Some of the more intimate of her son Sigmund's student-patients made a point of paying their respects to her regularly, and she would tell them stories about her "golden son," as well as about her "darling Alexander," and her faithful and devoted daughters—more particularly, the next to the youngest of them, Dolfi, who had been chosen by her brothers to take care of their mother.

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Whenever Dolfi went out my grandmother would stand at the window watching for her return, and not be content or easy until she saw her. There was a story in the family that when Dolfi was young she had had a chance to marry and found a family of her own, but had been dissuaded by her brothers, who preferred to have her there looking after their mother. As it was, when Grandmother at last died this poor aunt of mine, then not far from seventy herself, was completely broken and left without any real interest or purpose in life. Only later, when two of her widowed sisters came to live with her, one a refugee from Nazi Berlin, did her spirits pick up again.

I THINK that one of the circumstances that helped reinforce my impression of my grandmother's selfishness was the fact that she so successfully used her increasing deafness in order to avoid hearing what she did not want to hear—principally the report of any event that might require her to bestow an extra measure of sympathy or consolation upon some member of the family. She was over seventy by the time I noticed this, but still hale and hearty enough to stand up to such obligations had she wanted to. Thus, when a young granddaughter died tragically at the age of twenty-three, and she heard grief-stricken whispers all around her, she manifested no desire to learn their cause, nor was she expressly told of it. When the bereaved mother came to see her she never asked about the girl, nor did she inquire afterwards about her, though this granddaughter had visited her frequently in the past. Ten years later, however, she began to talk again about "poor Cecily," revealing that she had been fully aware all along of what had happened. . . .

My grandmother's sitting room on Sunday mornings was the weekly meeting place for her busy sons, her daughters and daughters-in-law, her grandchildren and their children. Even when convalescing from operations and illness, Professor Freud would always find time of a Sunday morning to pay his mother a visit and give her the pleasure of petting and making a fuss over him. When he could not come, her younger son, Alexander, with his son would be there to listen to all her troubles, and to those of his unmarried sister, too, and he would comfort them with promises of finding remedies. Though both brothers shared equally in the financial support of the female members of the family, one might say that Sigmund, the elder, was more the moral support, while Alexander, the younger, was more the practical one. Both were looked up to as the strong and successful males of the family.

When my grandmother was younger, there had been family reunions at Uncle Sigmund's house one evening a week, but these were discontinued when she began to find it more difficult to climb the stairs. Aunt Martha often accompanied Uncle Sigmund on his Sunday morning visits, and when she did not, she and her sister, Minna Bernays, who was now living permanently with them, made a point of coming to see my grandmother some time during the week. Relations between Aunt Martha and my grandmother were unmarred as long as I can remember.

My grandmother died in the fall of 1930, after several weeks of great weakness, of no particular ailment aside from old age and a worn-out body. Up to the last four months, she had continued to make her will felt and had insisted that, instead of spending the summer in Vienna, she be taken to her beloved Ischl in the mountains as before. Everybody was against it: her sons, the doctor, her daughters. But she had her way. She had to be carried to the train on a stretcher, looked after in her sleeping-car compartment by her doctor, and taken to her country apartment in an ambulance. But once there, she rallied for a while and sat on her balcony, enjoying both the view of the mountains and the consciousness that she was Ischl's oldest summer guest. Towards the end of summer, however, she grew weaker, and two weeks after her return to Vienna she fell into a coma and died peacefully.

With her going, the strong and vivid bond that held the family together was broken.

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AMERICAN JEWRY: PRESENT AND FUTURE

Part I: Present

HERBERT J. GANS

IN THE flurry of assertions about the future occasioned by the tercentenary of the American Jewish community, virtually no one, it would seem, took a real look at that community before beginning to prophesy. Rabbis and scholars were prone to start with a latter-day version of the conception of the Jews as the Chosen People. Optimistic leaders pointed to synagogue attendance statistics and the growth of a new Jewish day school as heralding the end of cultural and religious assimilation.

The sociologist attempts to take a more comprehensive view, focusing on the behavior of *all* members of the community, before he allows himself to speculate on future trends. Also, looking for similarities with other groups rather than for distinguishing characteristics alone, the sociologist must note that the five million American Jews are primarily an ethnic group resembling other ethnic groups in America, but with a culture—I use the word in the anthropological sense—in which a distinctive religion has been dominant, and with a rather special social relationship to the non-Jewish world.

Consequently, a sociological analysis would attempt to draw inferences from the long-term trends that have been affecting ethnic groups in this country, although taking due note that the religious and social distinctiveness of the Jews affects, and perhaps deflects, these trends in their case. I for one feel that while the Jewish *religion* has a distinctive character, the *religious life* of American Jewry—that is, the elements which most of the people have selected out of the total Judaic culture and religion for themselves—is no longer so different from the religious life of other ethnic groups as it once was. At the same time, there have been changes tending to lessen *social* distinctiveness.

AS WE know, American Jewry today is made up in large part of the children of the immigrants who came here between 1880 and 1920. These I shall call the second generation, with the qualification that I use the term to describe a *cultural* rather than

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IN AUGUST and September 1955, Will Herberg devoted a pair of articles to the religious revival in America. Nathan Glazer followed in December 1955 and January 1956 with another pair of articles on the Jewish community and its social and religious organization in this period. We continue the discussion with the first of two essays by HERBERT J. GANS dealing with much the same period and many of the same phenomena, but from a somewhat different viewpoint. About his articles, Mr. Gans says: "I write as a sociologist who tries to study American Jewry as he would any other ethnic group, or any other phenomenon. I am myself Jewish, but I have no ideology to put forth or to defend; I write these articles because, despite the current mood of revival, I feel the evidence suggests other conclusions, and that the ones I have reached reflect what is happening to the Jewish community over the long range. I should add that from the point of view of sociology, what has been written here is mostly on the level of hypothesis. Perhaps the current attempts at hypothesizing will stimulate much needed research." Mr. Gans has appeared before in the pages of COMMENTARY, notably with a study of the Jewish community of suburban Park Forest (April 1951). Born in Cologne, Germany, in 1927, Mr. Gans came to this country, via England, in 1940. He is research associate on the staff of the Institute for Urban Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. A sociologist and city planner, he received his master's degree from the University of Chicago, and is currently completing his doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania.

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a *chronological* generation. No one has yet straightened out the chronological components of what now constitutes American Jewry, but we *can* say with some assurance that the majority of adult American Jews today were brought up in an immigrant culture. Chiefly for reasons of space, I shall confine my attention to this group, ignoring the older German Jewry, recent refugees, and small-town Jewry in general.

The second generation has climbed the socio-economic ladder into the middle and upper middle class, and now averages a family income well above the $3,500-$4,000 that is median for American urban residents. Only in our very largest cities can the remnants of a Jewish working class still be found.

The pattern of social mobility followed by the Jews differs significantly from that of the other ethnic groups who came to this country in the late 19th century, as the studies of Leo Srole, Nathan Glazer, and Oscar Handlin have demonstrated. The latter suggested in his book *The Uprooted* that while many of the other immigrants were frightened peasants, the Jewish newcomers knew some of the requirements of urban life by the time they arrived on these shores. Furthermore, as Nathan Glazer pointed out in his "Social Characteristics of American Jews, 1655-1954" (*American Jewish Year Book 1955*) the Jews, unlike their fellow ethnics, had always been more or less middle class. Many of them had been plummeted into the working class by the advance of industrialism in East Europe, and remained in that class for a while after coming to this country, but their traditions, predispositions, and their willingness to postpone current pleasures enabled them to make the most of every opportunity to return to the middle class.

Such opportunities were soon found. Rarely looking to non-Jews for social recognition, they were free to go—and often had no choice but to go—into low-prestige but relatively profitable occupations. They sold clothing and general merchandise to other newcomers, Negroes and poor whites, dealt in liquor, credit, loans, junk, etc., etc. They engaged in speculative ventures like low-rental housing, or went into the then low-prestige field of the movies and other forms of popular entertainment. And, of course, they operated stores and garment factories. These fields were attractive because they required little capital investment; and Jews moved into them at a time when the economy was expanding rapidly, so that the long-term increase in the demand for consumer goods, and especially the buying booms of the 1920's and the 1940's, made many of them wealthy.

However, to explain adequately the present status of American Jewry—the direction which their mobility took, and the opportunities they accepted—I must deal with another factor, the upbringing of the second-generation Jew.

The second generation grew up straddled between two cultures. Its East European Jewish tradition featured an Orthodoxy often felt as inhibiting, or else it stressed an equally strict and almost equally Jewish, if secular, ethic of self-improvement. The America that the second generation first came to know intimately was, on the other hand, the exciting and "permissive" culture of the sidewalk and the news stand, as well as the more status-conscious atmosphere of the public school. Most of the first generation that had come here in their maturity adopted only as much of American culture as was necessary to shelter their transplanted European Jewish way of life. Their children, however, were for the most part exposed more openly to the American way and, as they grew up, were variously affected by the split between the culture they knew at home and the one they met in the outside world. The second-generation Jew thus developed a new, though often ambivalent, perspective on both cultures that loosened or entirely cut off his emotional allegiance to many of the values and codes fostered by either.

The kind of upbringing received by many a second-generation American Jew was what sociologists describe as "marginal." It forced him to find his own solutions, but at the

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same time it also provided him with the drives and incentives of one who feels himself handicapped, though not insuperably so. Maturing, he attempted to select or develop new values and ways of living for himself. In the process, he found at least three major orientations; these define some of the special roles the Jew plays today in American society and help to distinguish him from the members of other ethnic groups: the consumer-oriented producer and promoter, the intellectual, and the socially conscious reformer.

But before discussing these orientations, we should note that the type of personality developed by this "marginal" upbringing was not altogether an American product; for the impact of Enlightenment on Orthodox tradition had already exposed Jewish children in 19th-century Eastern Europe to similar cultural conflicts. A good number of the immigrants were virtually "second-generation marginals" before leaving for America; indeed, they were perhaps the ones most likely to emigrate to the New World of freedom and opportunity in the first place.

Release from traditional values had the effect of heightening certain sensitivities in many Jews that were of great advantage in commercial pursuits. One of these, a distinguishing quality of many Jewish businessmen, was a lively awareness of changing consumer needs and tastes, no matter in what field or trade. Often coupled with this was an enterprising spirit and a willingness to take risks, especially in areas shunned by others for status reasons.

A marginal upbringing acted in other cases to stimulate curiosity about relations between people, and the workings of society and the world. Moreover, liberation from absolute and traditional values opened new perspectives, reduced ethnocentric biases, and fostered an uncommitted, relativistic outlook. All this helped to attract many Jews to the frontiers of basic research, especially in the new social sciences—sociology, anthropology, and psychology. Others pursued a similar intellectual bent in the less open humanistic and natural science disciplines.

With still other Jews, the clash of values, the handicaps they experienced early in life as members of a minority, and the personal problems that resulted therefrom, nourished a consuming interest in values themselves, and in the application of ethical ideals to concrete situations of many kinds. This concern, which we have come to call "social consciousness," has manifested itself in welfare and reform activities.

I do not want to suggest that such inclinations on the part of the second generation define character types, or that most Jews are either business promoters, intellectuals, or reformers. Rather, these should be understood as orientations of American Jewish life that are frequently found (sometimes combined in one and the same person) in typical American Jews at a level of intensity entirely compatible with their ordinary middle-class goals, and serving to distinguish them only slightly from their neighbors and colleagues.

However, there remained a significant minority of Jews whose marginal upbringing left them with strong inferiority feelings, or otherwise affected egos, which stimulated an inordinate need to prove themselves, whether by acquiring wealth or power, by winning fame or attention, or by amassing knowledge. Hence the driving, and on occasion undisciplined, energy so conspicuous in some second-generation Jews.

This account has squeezed a great many facts into the two categories of mobility and marginality, and oversimplified fifty years of history. But we are searching for the main trends that will provide some ground on which to explain the present as well as predict the future of American Jewry.

TO DESCRIBE properly the effect of mobility and marginality on the second-generation American Jew's attitude towards his Jewish world, I must first distinguish between two aspects of Jewish life, *Judaism* and *Jewishness*. By Judaism, I mean the Jewish culture (using that word, again, in its anthropological sense). But the term Judaism itself has two applications; we can speak of a traditional or of a symbolic Judaism. Traditional

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Judaism embraces a great complex of sacred and secular, ceremonial and everyday codes and behavior patterns, and its most authoritative example for American Jews is the style of life followed by their forebears in Eastern Europe up to the 20th century. The religious theme central to it was once all-pervasive under Orthodoxy but is now less so under the Reform and Conservative redefinitions. Nevertheless, my definition of traditional Judaism does include contemporary Conservative and Reform institutions. (Symbolic Judaism will be defined in another place.)

Jewishness, on the other hand, refers to one's sense of identity as a Jew, and the concomitant sense of identification with other members of the Jewish community. Primarily a feeling of belongingness, Jewishness has been an effect, rather than a cause, of the cohesion of that community.

The second-generation Jew has been drifting away from traditional Judaism as I have defined it. This has by no means been the result of a conscious, deliberate decision; what has happened is that his rearing has detached him from traditional codes, and the aspirations he acquired from his own background and the world around him have directed him into a way of life largely incompatible with the traditional mores. While the first generation concerned itself mainly with achieving a standard of living, giving up on the whole only those elements of tradition which interfered with its economic goals, the second generation has aspired not only to the income but also to the way of life of the larger American middle class. The sensitivity he acquired from his marginal upbringing combined with the historic Jewish predilection for middle-class habits and mores to help the second-generation Jew adapt quickly to the demands of American life. True, his tastes may be somewhat more *nouveau riche* or "modern," his reading slightly more highbrow, and his politics somewhat more liberal than those of his non-Jewish middle-class counterpart, but these differences, it should be emphasized, can be attributed almost as much to the sheer fact of his marginality as to the historical and traditional inclinations of Jewry.

As a result of the pressures, the training, and the rewards offered by American society at large, traditional Judaism has ceased to be a living culture for the second-generation Jew. Parts of it, however, have remained active in the form of habits or emotions; these are now providing the impetus for a new "symbolic Judaism" still in process of development.

UNLIKE other ethnic groups, in which the gradual disappearance of the traditional ethnic culture has been accompanied by social assimilation, American Jews have tended to maintain a community of remarkable cohesiveness, partly because they hold many values in common, but also because of their minority status and the separatism of the non-Jewish majority groups. Generally the Jew still lives in what are called Jewish neighborhoods—or now, Jewish suburbs; his best friends are almost certain to be Jewish; and his wife likes to have the children play with other Jewish children wherever possible. Jews are inclined to go into business with other Jews, quite often relatives, thus preserving some aspects of the clan-like nature of the Jewish family. Intermarriage, one of the most effective disintegrating forces in any society, seems never to have gone over the 10 per cent mark for Jews in this country.

Like much of his private life, the community activities of the second-generation American Jew are only a special, quasi-ethnic version of American middle-class community pursuits in general. The second generation's organizations, its lodges, committees, and veterans', professionals', and women's clubs—even its Zionist groups—are much like their Protestant middle-class counterparts in form, and in many cases even in substance.

The same applies even to the synagogue, though to a lesser extent. Reform, Conservative, and even some East European Orthodox congregations have created a quasi-Protestant division between secular and sacred activities. They have introduced "decorum," choirs, and Sunday schools, and have assigned rabbis the duties and status held

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by ministers in middle-class Protestant churches.*

In the process of making these adaptations the second-generation Jew has gradually abandoned the kind of Jewish community in which his immigrant parents moved, while taking over and altering the one set up by the German Jews when they came here in the middle of the 19th century.

Furthermore, like most Americans, the second-generation Jew who has "arrived" seeks recognition in social, cultural, or quasi-cultural terms. On the whole, he tends to look for this (or may only be able to get it) within the Jewish community. There, religious learning and piety no longer count for as much as they did among the first generation, so that we find the second-generation Jew accepting and living by the same criteria of prestige as his non-Jewish neighbors. He joins country clubs (mostly Jewish), is politically active, acquires "culture," admires doctors, powerful lawyers, or celebrities, and looks down on the unsuccessful, the nonconformist, and even on the scholar, just the way everybody else does.

The departure from traditional Judaism, and the correlative Americanization of the Jewish community, did not significantly affect the Jewishness, as distinct from the Judaism, of the majority of second-generation Jews. Like their immigrant forebears, they could actually envisage no alternatives to being Jewish, and their Jewishness was similarly submerged and unconscious, entirely beyond the realm of choice. There were, of course, some who did grow up questioning the culture of their homes and rebelling against their minority status, but the very intensity of their effort to repudiate their Jewishness reflected the degree to which it had unconsciously taken hold of them.

Some writers have regarded the flight from the Jewish community as typical for a large part of second-generation Jewry. However, while many intellectuals may have tried to escape, the great mass of Jews in this country never even considered the possibility. They became middle class almost as a matter of course, assimilating culturally to the majority, but continuing to live among Jews without questioning their own Jewishness or its ineluctability.

IN THE last fifteen years or so, domestic prosperity and security, not to mention Hitler and the State of Israel, have given the second generation a new and vivid consciousness of their Jewishness. But an even more important factor in the development of this awareness has been the arrival of children.

The younger second-generation parents were faced, virtually without preparation, with the question of whether or not they wanted to raise their children as Jews. The answer has been overwhelmingly in the affirmative. To be sure, what seemed in the 30's an "ideological" choice between two possible alternatives—assimilation or identification—was not really that at all. Even those Jews who answered in the negative, or who wanted to let their children choose for themselves, discovered that it was not exactly a matter of free choice, that society was labeling their children Jews anyway. The real question became, then, how to make them *feel* that they were Jews. At this point, many parents realized for the first time the extent to which they had absorbed the unconscious Jewishness of their first-generation progenitors. But by that time they had given up the traditional Judaism of their parents which they assumed had been the source of their own sense of Jewishness. Could they inculcate a similar "reflexive," or unconscious Jewishness by bringing back traditional Judaism? They were often urged by rabbinical voices to try. But culturally and psychologically, they were neither able nor willing to do so.

How they solved the problem by shifting the burden to the Jewish school will be shown in my concluding article. What we have to notice here is that in their concern with the problem, amidst confusion and ambivalence, the young parents began to glimpse more clearly the shape of their own

*See Marshall Sklare's *Conservative Judaism: An American Religious Movement* (Free Press, 1955).

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feelings. Not by study or reflection, but in the making of practical decisions and in the coping with particular situations these feelings gradually evolved into a partly conscious, partly unconscious set of Jewish feelings that has guided the second generation arranging for their children's Jewish education.

THOUGH second-generation Jewishness penetrates into all phases of life, the very tenuousness of its hold on the second-generation Jew makes him feel the need to assert or confirm it, on secular as well as sacred occasions, in various material and non-material ways that have been newly devised or lifted from their traditional, Old World context. The forms and materials of this new expression of Jewishness I call "symbolic Judaism," which, in my opinion, is rapidly supplanting traditional Judaism in this country. I use the term "symbolic" because one of its major functions is to serve as a symbol for the *expression* of Jewishness.

Symbolic Judaism has been developing ever since the second generation began having children, but the sharp fall in the birth rate during the depression concealed its first emergence. The baby boom that began in the early 40's and reached its height after the war, by intensifying and accelerating the changes at the root of the need for symbolic Judaism, brought it finally to the foreground of our attention. So it was only over the last decade that the American Jewish community discovered that a "religious revival" had come about, with what seemed dramatic suddenness.

Closer observation will show, however, that the "Jewish revival" is not a return to the observance of traditional Judaism, but a manifestation in the main of the new symbolic Judaism. Nathan Glazer's article in the December 1955 COMMENTARY showed how it also reflects postwar prosperity, the multiplication of new families, and the exodus to small-townish suburbs where one is under the obligation to identify oneself with some group or other. I agree with Mr. Glazer's analysis. But my point here is that within this new social environment, the people who flock to the synagogues go there not so much to practice the traditional Judaic religion, as to feel and express their Jewishness—both for themselves and their children.

Contemporary symbolic Judaism—unlike traditional, all-embracing Judaism—functions as one element among many making up the middle-class way of life of the second-generation Jew. It comes to the fore especially on holidays, at family gatherings, and on other special occasions. Far from being an original creation, it has developed out of, and includes, traditional elements. But it does not form an integrated culture; rather, it appears as a combination of barely related themes. I shall describe three of the more important of these themes. For the sake of clarity, they will be treated as if they constituted separate cultures.

The first is a Jewish "objects culture" that consists in the collecting and displaying of traditionally Jewish symbols and physical objects adapted to American tastes. The second is a new "Jewish popular culture" that "Judaizes" themes taken from current American popular culture. The third is a "problems culture" that permits the expression of Jewishness by defining cultural problems as moral issues.

JEWISH "objects culture" developed out of a complicated set of circumstances. When second-generation Jews turned away from traditional Judaism, no longer accepting its codes as guides to a way of life, the latter ceased to be a living culture for most of them. Since then, and especially during the current Jewish revival, some of the practices and norms of traditional religion, once carried on more or less unconsciously and habitually as part of a relatively coherent whole, have been lifted out of their original context and given a new and independent existence as "customs" or "ceremonies" that people observe self-consciously and strive to maintain in order to feel Jewish.

The first-generation Jew had no need to decorate his house with Stars of David or hang pictures of a rabbi on the wall in order to give a Jewish "feel" to his world. Nor did

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he require the presence of physical objects in order to live his culture; these were there only because tradition and religious law prescribed them, and they were strictly secondary. But the second-generation Jew, who has kept a custom here and a ceremony there from a once living complex, yet wants to experience them as "richly" and "fully" as if they were still the vital habits of old, has had to seek symbols, or tangible representations, outside himself in order to endow what he has preserved with concrete reality. These symbols have now become the appurtenances of what might be called an "objectified" Judaism.

"Objectification" is not unique to American Jewry; it goes on among all ethnic groups. The new prominence of objects usually provokes those still living the culture in its more or less original form to complain that artificiality and commercialism are setting in. There is some truth in this, for objects detached from their original functions do tend to become museum pieces and collector's items. But for second-generation American Jewry, the symbols and tangible objects are not at all functionless and are certainly not confined to museums: they have the important purpose of *expressing* Jewishness, especially in religious moods and situations.

Jewish "objects culture" is all around us. A relatively large amount of business is now done in things whose main function is to be "Jewish" or portray something Jewish: doilies and tablecloths with the Star of David, pictures, books, and records depicting Jews (usually conspicuously pious ones), and *dreidls* whose faces are crammed with Jewish history.

Many of the objects of this "culture" owe their existence, of course, to the fact that the Jewish holidays have become children's holidays, and the ways in which they are now celebrated are designed to induce the children to feel Jewish. But in order to be made attractive, the holidays have to be Americanized. Thus Passover themes are put into coloring books and embroidery kits, others into "religious objects dominoes," and so on. A highly inventive commercial culture has developed here.

But adults also respond to the "objects culture." For them, it is perhaps expressed more intangibly, in attempts to create a Jewish "atmosphere" or Jewish "cultural environment" (to use the tags Jewish resorts and camps frequently advertise with), and in the "cultural evenings" sponsored by Jewish organizations. Rabbis, writers of holiday manuals, and housewives intent on creating a "real" Friday night have selected from the overflowing warehouse of religious tradition those features calculated to appeal most to the second as well as to the young third generation. Not prayers and study, fasting and waiting six hours between meat and milk, but Friday night candles, the shofar, Chanukah lamps, matzoh, and various other holiday foods characteristically convey the new Jewishness in its religious moods.

Jewish food companies publish brochures on the history of festivals, the food customs, and their rituals, while furnishing glossaries of the words to be used, recipe-fashion, in observing them. This quasi-anthropological attitude has the effect of permitting those for whom Jewishness is only one allegiance among many, or for whom it means something strictly for the children, to maintain a certain detachment from the proceedings.

In recent years, some aspects of Israeli life have been taken into the "objects culture." Imported Israeli religious objects, jewelry, movies, and especially Israeli songs and dances have become vicarious symbols for a sometimes joyful, pioneering, and—most important—youthful Judaism.

THE "objects culture" is, however, primarily an adaptation of religious forms, and given the compartmentalized role played by religion in the life of the American Jewish middle class, it can nourish only a part of the total complex needed to embody second-generation Jewishness. On the secular level, the second generation patronizes "Jewish popular culture," which adds a Jewish flavor to popular American fare.

A candy manufacturer molds chocolate in

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matzoh form and it becomes "Jewish candy." A meat packer prepares smoked beef and sells it as "Jewish bacon." Cocktail napkins are available bearing cartoons in "fractured Yiddish," and there are Jewish Mother Goose rhymes, Father's Day cards, and greeting cards with idiomatic Yiddish expressions in Roman-letter transliteration. Songwriter Mickey Katz can take an American hit tune, replace its romantic lyrics with a mixture of Yiddish and English phrases about Jewish cooking, add a Jewish wedding music arrangement, and the song becomes Jewish. Jewish comedians of national fame entertain the primarily second-generation Jewish audiences of big-city night clubs by "Judaizing" some of the same material they present in a neutral form over radio or television.

Much of this Jewish popular culture is comic, and often satiric, in vein. The emphasis on comedy may be partly a reaction to the second generation's early view of Judaism as something serious and often repressive. But comedy is also used to mask a furtive nostalgia, or to vent guilt feelings over the departure from Judaic traditions, or to air problems and conflicts in an atmosphere sharply divorced from everyday realities.

But perhaps most important of all, Jewish popular culture, comic and otherwise, affixes a Jewish label to American culture, turning its consumption into another expression of Jewishness. An aside in Yiddish on TV by, say, Milton Berle constitutes an assertion of the right of Jewishness not only to exist, but to be displayed as publicly and as freely as other styles of American feeling.

Perhaps the most vital of all aspects of contemporary symbolic Judaism is the Jewish cuisine. It is the one aspect of traditional Eastern European life which has not only survived, but seems to have been reinforced and elaborated in this country. Food, we know, plays a significant role in Jewish social, recreational, and religious life in America. For more than a few Jews, holidays become family and eating festivals (no wonder Manischewitz sells more than eighty kinds of Passover food). Through food one can satisfy one's taste for the pleasurable side of the things associated with the parental home, and as long as such obviously *treife* items as shellfish and pork are avoided, appetites are not troubled by pangs of conscience. Furthermore, the blossoming of the kosher food industry permits prodigals to restore some kosher items to their menus without pain or effort, and lets them feel they are once again following tradition.

Food best illustrates the selectivity of the new Jewish "popular culture" as well as of the new Jewish "objects culture." Both tend to salvage from Jewish tradition only those themes, objects, and experiences which bring pleasure and at the same time never conflict with or disrupt the basically American way of life. On the few occasions when self-denial might be demanded, American technology is there to eliminate the inconvenience; thus almost every American diet staple is now available in kosher or Passover form.

Whereas traditional Judaism was restrictive and expected some sacrifice and self-denial, the new kinds of Judaism abroad in this country must, like much else in American leisure culture, be permissive, providing stimulation, enjoyment, and emotional satisfaction without threat of sanction. The source of direction does not come from tradition, or the word of God, but mostly from the audience itself, and if the theme in question is to survive it must remain attuned to changing middle-class tastes—almost like a product sold on the market.

Many of the things named here as components of symbolic Judaism have little religious or intellectual significance. Consequently, they have received scant attention. Yet it is precisely such *popular* items as these which provide insight into the direction a community is taking.

But the second-generation Jew also expresses his Jewishness in his preoccupation with the problems of being Jewish in America. This is what Samuel Gringauz, a European writer, has called Jewish "problem culture." Some of the main features of this "culture" are concern over anti-Semitism,

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intermarriage, irreligiousness, community apathy, cultural or social assimilation, and "social climbing."

I am not suggesting that these are not real problems, or that they are not being approached as such by many organizations and individuals. But the style in which they have been taken up by many members, rank and file as well as leaders, of the Jewish community is designed less to lead to concrete solutions than to permit Jewishness to be expressed through "right thinking" and approved moral attitudes. Many of these problems cannot be solved by individual action, nor are they altogether amenable to rational choice. But one who may himself be moving away from traditional Judaism can allay his fears, and even strengthen his own sense of Jewishness, by protesting vigorously, on moral grounds, against assimilation. Other problems provide opportunities to take a position that reinforces pride in one's Jewishness.

As Samuel Gringauz commented on his arrival in this country: "The Jewish culture of Western Europe was neither a pattern of life nor a culture based on experience . . . it was a problem culture—that is, a culture based on the examination and analysis of the problems of Jewish life. And this tendency has been taken over by the Jews of America. . . . Precisely because the life of the American Jews does not develop in specifically Jewish forms, what *is* specifically Jewish in America is expressed more in intellectual content than in patterns of living . . . and the problem of the Jewish future thrusts historical-philosophical and national-psychological problems to the fore."* Dr. Gringauz was speaking mainly of Jewish intellectuals, for whom self-definition can perhaps provide the spiritual satisfactions that others get from Friday night candles.

MANY of the changes touched on here are not unique to American Jewry. Other ethnic groups that came to America at the same time as the East European Jews are relinquishing their Old World cultures even more rapidly than they, while assimilating into the larger religious sub-cultures that Will Herberg has described. The difference between these groups and American Jewry has derived largely from the cohesiveness of the Jewish community, which has been based on the distinctiveness of traditional Judaism, and the actual or expected hostility of the non-Jewish majorities.

As a middle-class way of life and the new symbolic Judaism replace traditional Judaism, and as cultural and other differences between Jew and non-Jew fade, the new self-conscious Jewishness of the second generation becomes increasingly important to the cohesion, and indeed the very existence, of the Jewish community. In a concluding article, I propose to discuss the part played by this new self-conscious Jewishness, and the kind of Judaism that accompanies it, in the rearing of the third generation, and to go on from there to speculate about the future of American Jewry as a whole.

*"Jewish Destiny as the D.P.'s See It," COMMENTARY, December 1947.

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DESEGREGATION: PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, VA.

A Local Chronicle

JAMES RORTY

A BEATEN and exhausted Confederacy fought its last battles in Prince Edward County in southern Virginia's Black Belt. Ninety years later Prince Edward County became the defendant in one of the five cases on which the United States Supreme Court based its already historic decision outlawing segregated education in the public schools.

It is an old agricultural county, located in a pleasant region of low hills and fertile valleys, to which settlers from the Jamestown Colony came during the first half of the 18th century. The Appomattox, which forms the boundary between Prince Edward and Cumberland County on the north, was once deep enough to float the bateaux that transported the Colonial planters' tobacco and wheat to tidewater; today that sluggish and meandering stream is hopelessly clogged by the silt from eroded hillside tobacco farms, many of which have been wisely returned to pasture or forest.

Farmville, the county seat, is located on the south bank of the river, about thirty miles from its source in the Appomattox State Forest. It is a town of 4,375 people, about half of whom are Negroes, and the Negro pupils constitute 54 per cent of the school enrollment. The town has a standard Southern Main Street, a pillared but comparatively modern court house, and an industrial section dominated by a half-dozen large tobacco warehouses. On the hill above is the handsome campus of Longwood University, around which cluster the homes of the more prosperous residents. Beyond and below the University is the First (Negro) Baptist Church, surrounded by the shacks and stores of a solidly segregated Negro district.

It was in Farmville that General Robert E. Lee spent his last night before crossing over the county line to Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, to surrender to General U. S. Grant. Steeped in the history and legend of the War Between the States, the leading citizens of Prince Edward County attach a symbolic significance to the fact that at the surrender General Lee and his officers were permitted to retain their sidearms. True peace did not come, they say, until many years later when the conservative Redeemers of Virginia's traditional society triumphed at last over the "foul conspiracy" of carpetbaggers, scalawags, and Populists that had imposed Negro rule on the South.

THE Supreme Court broke that peace, they insist, by its May 17, 1954, decision which suddenly outlawed the "separate but equal" covenant on which the relations of the races had been based over the preceding half century. Rather than submit to so abominable a betrayal, they will fight, say Virginia's Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Rights. They will fight in the courts and in the legislatures under the banner of "interposition"; if Yankee troops were again to invade the sovereign state of Virginia to enforce the Court's decision, they would fight, they tell you more or less in William Faulkner's words, in the streets and on the farms.

The Redeemers of yesterday are the Defenders of today, and many of them bear the same names. Their president is Robert

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JAMES RORTY conducts us on a tour of Prince Edward County, which is one of the "South Side" counties of Virginia that are vehemently opposing desegregation. Mr. Rorty, a regular contributor—who happens to be a poet of note as well as journalist—appeared in these pages most recently with "Greek Letter Discrimination" (February).

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B. Crawford, owner of Farmville's Kilkare Laundry, Bible school teacher, and for fifteen years a member of Prince Edward County's school board. Mr. Crawford's gray eminence is J. B. Wall, the able, cultivated editor of the Farmville *Herald,* which has long been regarded as one of the best edited weeklies in the South. Farmville is one of the major manufacturing and trade centers for Virginia's tobacco-growing South Side counties, whose farmers and businessmen have a vested interest in a segregated and unorganized labor force.

In short, Prince Edward County—where again, as this is written, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is pressing for the implementation of the Court's desegregation order—is the heart and center of Virginia's effort to retain, in the schools as elsewhere, the separation of the races and the supremacy of the whites on which its social, economic, and political institutions are based.

Not that Prince Edward County can be considered as representative of Virginia's collective will. On the contrary. If they were permitted to do so, most of the counties and cities of the Old Dominion could and would begin desegregating their schools tomorrow, although without enthusiasm as far as most of the whites are concerned. They can't because, on the issue of the perpetuation of Virginia's anachronistic and slowly disintegrating dual society, they are temporarily the prisoners of the twenty South Side counties, whose representatives hold the balance of power in the ruling political oligarchy that reporters refer to, accurately enough, as "the Byrd machine."

THE Defenders have persuaded themselves, and would like to persuade others, that Virginia's present tightly segregated dual society has back of it a hallowed, centuries-old tradition, unbroken save by the horrific interlude of the Reconstruction. Actually, this is largely myth. Slavery was not like that—it entailed the opposite of racial segregation—nor was it like that in the memories of Negroes now living. As late as the turn of the century, Negroes were serving on grand and petit juries in most of the South Side counties. The present *de facto* disfranchisement of the race, which chiefly explains the overwhelming South Side vote on January 9, 1956, in favor of amending Virginia's state constitution to permit the use of tax money for the support of private schools, became effective only after the adoption of the State Constitution of 1902. After that date there came a rapid accumulation of state laws and local ordinances introducing segregation into practically every aspect of life and work. As Professor C. Vann Woodward remarks in *The Strange Career of Jim Crow:* "Few have any idea of the relative recency of the Jim Crow laws, or any clear notion of how, when, and why the system arose. There is nothing in their history books that gives them much help. And there is considerable in the books that is likely to mislead and confuse them."

One might expect to find this judgment applying with special force to books of local history. Yet in Herbert Clarence Bradshaw's excellent *History of Prince Edward County, Virginia* one finds plenty of data to support Professor Woodward's thesis about the status of Negroes both during and after slavery.

Prince Edward County's plantation owners, who settled the county on large land grants dating back to 1730, were among the first to register their dissatisfaction with the South's "peculiar institution." In 1797, by the will of Richard Randolph of Bizarre, the slaves of the Randolph plantation were freed. They numbered about a hundred and were settled in a community known as Israel Hill, on small parcels of land of from ten to twenty-five acres to the family.

The colony prospered and multiplied, writes the historian, so long as the habits of industry acquired under slavery continued. But when these habits were forgotten, later generations in Israel Hill became "idle and vicious" and decreased in numbers. Nonetheless, in 1830 there were more free Negroes in Prince Edward County than in any other county in the state, and this was attributed largely to the survivors of the Israel Hill colony. Their status was like that of other

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antebellum freedmen in the South (who numbered several hundred thousand): they had lost the security and privileges of slavery, such as they were, without acquiring the rights and advantages of full citizenship. They enjoyed no equality in the courts, their right to assemble was denied, their movements were circumscribed, and they got little or no schooling. Given such handicaps, it was perhaps inevitable that their resulting condition would seem to lend some support to local racists who declared that Negroes could not profit from freedom, at the same time that other Virginians were contending that both whites and blacks were inevitably corrupted by slavery.*

It was from this intolerable half-world of the antebellum freedmen that the Radical Republicans of the Reconstruction period tried to rescue the Negroes liberated by the Emancipation Proclamation. And it was to this degraded condition that they were returned by the subsequent triumph of the Redeemers and the legislation of a Jim Crow society for which there was no precedent in the earlier mores of the South.

Prince Edward County's historian documents both phases of this experience in rich detail. After the Civil War the county headquarters of the Freedmen's Bureau was established in the Farmville Hospital. One Edgar ("Yankee") Allen, who had been a private in the Union army, became the Radical Republican boss of the county, which in 1872 gave 1,872 votes to General Grant to 583 for Horace Greeley. A year later, though the conservatives carried the state, the Radicals won in Prince Edward County by almost two to one. During the next decade the local conservatives, despite periodic resort to ballot box-stuffing and threatened violence, were unable to gain control.

In 1888 three Negroes represented Prince Edward county in the Virginia House of Delegates and three in the Senate. A year later, Virginia elected a conservative governor. But the Republicans held most of the county offices until 1891. In 1893, however, the Populists carried the county—with the help of Negro votes. In the Presidential election of 1896 Bryan—bearing a wing of the Democratic party with him, and white supremacy with the Democrats—carried Prince Edward County by only a narrow margin, but by 1900 the tide had definitely turned and the vote was 843 for Bryan, 514 for McKinley.

The triumph of white supremacy was consolidated by the adoption of the 1902 state constitution under the virulently racist leadership of Carter Glass. Under the new constitution illiterates were disfranchised and the Negro vote in Prince Edward County was reduced to about 10 per cent of what it had been. Before 1900, the Farmville district counted 600 to 800 votes; under the new law there remained only 277 white voters and 40 Negro.

"The possibility of Negro domination of local government," writes Bradshaw, "always a threat under the old suffrage law, was removed."

DURING the 70's, 80's, and 90's, Negroes had voted in large numbers in Prince Edward County, as in other South Side counties, where they constituted, as they still do, a majority of the population. Indeed, as Professor Woodward notes, qualified and acknowledged leaders of Southern white opinion went on record as saying that it was proper, inevitable, and desirable that Negroes should vote. After 1902, however,

*Dislike of slavery appears to have been rather prevalent among Prince Edward County's gentlemen farmers. In a long poem in heroic couplets, published in 1819, William Branch, Jr., of Golgotha, wrote that

Slaves near our offspring teach them to be slaves . . . the kidnapped brood
Robbed of their rights and barred of every good;
Barren of mind and in their manners base,
We foolish, o'er our infant nurseries place.
The blooming charge oft leaves the mother's charms
To breathe infection in the bondman's arms. . . .
Thus rear'd by slaves, he ever lives a slave
For crouching bondmen seldom rear the brave.

Many local plantation owners freed their slaves, and some, observing the unhappy status of the freedmen in Prince Edward County and elsewhere in the South, paid for their transportation to Liberia in Africa.

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they ceased to vote. And in 1956, over fifty years later, they were still not voting, as evidenced by Prince Edward County's adoption by a vote of 2,835 to 350 of the amendment to Virginia's constitution permitting public funds to be used for private schools.

Disfranchisement was not enough, however, in Prince Edward County or elsewhere. Previously, the only Jim Crow legislation adopted by the majority of Southern states was to enforce segregation on trains, and in 1900 Virginia was the last to adopt such a law. But in that year the Richmond *Times* demanded that the principle of segregation be applied rigidly "in every relation of Southern life," on the ground that "God Almighty drew the color line and it cannot be obliterated." In the next two decades there ensued—as I have said—a spate of segregation laws and ordinances that had no precedent or warrant in the traditional folkways of the South. In Prince Edward County, and elsewhere in Virginia, Jim Crow signs blossomed over waiting rooms, water fountains, toilets, ticket windows. The poor, the sick, the insane, even prostitutes were segregated. Courts went to the length of providing Jim Crow Bibles for Negro witnesses.

Before the Civil War there was no public education in Virginia for Negroes—and none for the whites, except for indigent white children, who shared in the largess of the Literary Fund created in 1811. The Fund was administered by school commissioners appointed in each county. The quantity and quality of this kind of education may be judged by Prince Edward's share of the Fund's income, which in 1851 was $384.

After the war a public school system was set up under the Reconstruction Constitution of 1867-68, but did not make its appearance in Prince Edward County until 1871. A decade later there were 764 white pupils receiving instruction in twenty-seven white schools and 984 Negroes in 20 Negro schools. The actual working out of the earlier "separate but equal" rulings of the Supreme Court may be judged from the steady increase of Negro enrollment during the succeeding decades, with relatively little increase in Negro school facilities. In 1890 there were 884 whites in 32 schools and 2,217 Negroes in 33 schools. White schools in Farmville customarily operated for eight and a half months; Negro schools for six months. By 1911 there were 84 schools in Prince Edward divided equally between whites and Negroes, but the Negro enrollment was approximately twice that of the whites. As early as 1882 Negro parents vainly petitioned for the appointment of a Negro teacher in the Farmville colored school. By 1920 there were forty-eight Negro teachers in Negro elementary schools, but still no Negro high school teachers—and in fact, no Negro high schools. "The interest in high school development," writes Bradshaw, "seemed entirely confined to the white people." Farmville's first Negro high school was named for R. R. Moton, a former president of Tuskeegee who had lived as a boy in Prince Edward County. Built in 1926, it was overcrowded when opened, but not until 1939 were its hopelessly inadequate accommodations supplemented by the erection, with WPA help, of three tarpaper shacks on the school grounds.

From 1939 to 1946 the chairman of Prince Edward County's school board was Robert B. Crawford, now president of the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Rights. During this period the Negro parents petitioned repeatedly for the construction of a new high school, only to be told that no funds were available for that purpose. When they persisted, a delegation of the Negro Parent-Teachers' Association, led by the Reverend L. Francis Griffin, pastor of the Negro Baptist church, was told not to come again until they were invited; that the investment in the existing high school must be amortized before the financial condition of the county would permit the construction of a new Negro high school.

The Defenders of Prince Edward County regard the Reverend Griffin as one of the

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chief authors of the County's current troubles. He is a somewhat corpulent six-footer, now in his middle thirties, and reputedly a considerable pulpit orator. During World War II he served in North Africa and Italy. He finished his training for the ministry in 1949 and came to Farmville after the death of his father, a greatly respected clergyman to whom several of Farmville's leading citizens pay high tribute. A good Negro and a fine Christian, they say; he knew the only way to get anything for his people was to ask the white people for it. True, the record shows that his son asked the white folks too, but in a different manner. It was he, they insist, who, along with the school principal, another war veteran, instigated the strike of students in Farmville's Negro high school. This led to the suit subsequently brought by the NAACP—one of the five through which the constitutionality of segregation in schools was successfully challenged.

The NAACP lawyers tell a different story. Oliver Hill, the NAACP attorney in Richmond, says that the first he heard of the strike was when his office received a telephone call from the striking students. He, Spottswood Robinson, who is another NAACP attorney, and Thomas H. Henderson, dean of Virginia Union University in Richmond, were then returning from a trip to Pulaski; they agreed to stop off in Farmville on their way back, although, since the NAACP had planned no action in Prince Edward County, they expected that they could do nothing except advise the children to go back to their classes.

When they arrived at Farmville, however, they found that the strikers had real grievances; the Negro high school was a leaky and inadequate makeshift and had been so regarded for years, even by the white school board. The strike was well organized; while student patrols kept the younger children off the street, strike meetings were held in the basement of the Baptist church.

The Reverend Griffin insists that he had no part in instigating the strike, but acknowledges that he participated actively once it had started. The NAACP took the case only after the students had agreed to enlarge their demands for a new school to include a collateral demand for desegregation; by 1951 that had become the NAACP tactic in all such cases.

At the trial of the case, in February 1952, the testimony of Dean Henderson concerning the "separate but equal" concept of Negro education, as it had worked out in Virginia, embodied many of the facts already recited. When the public school system was established in 1870 both plant and teaching were about equally bad for both races (the well-to-do whites having their private academies). But there soon developed a disparity in favor of the whites which steadily widened. This was especially true in Virginia's twenty South Side counties, where Negroes frequently outnumber whites. By 1925, less than twenty-five cents of tax money was being spent on Negro schools for every dollar spent on white; in most of the South Side counties this disparity persisted as late as 1946.

In Farmville it was only after the strike of the high school students and the filing of the NAACP suit that the School Board found the money to build the new R. R. Moton High School for Negroes. It is a handsome modern structure and cost $850,000, this being over twice the total appropriations for new Negro school construction during the preceding twenty years.

The lag in the construction of Negro school facilities, although in flagrant disregard of the law, seems natural enough to the all-white school boards of the South Side counties. As J. B. Wall editorialized in the June 10, 1955, Farmville *Journal*, "Naturally, progress in the Negro plants followed that in the white plants, because an overwhelming part of the taxes were paid by the white citizens."

The NAACP suit was instituted in June of 1951; the white leaders of Prince Edward County made at least one effort to induce the Negro complainants to drop it in exchange for a commitment by the school

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board to build the new Negro high school. At a meeting held in Mr. Crawford's laundry, the Reverend Griffin was urged to accept this settlement in behalf of his followers. He refused, walked out of the meeting, and has subsequently, he believes, paid a heavy price for his recalcitrancy. Tradesmen who formerly gave him credit now demanded cash.* A faction of his congregation turned against him. Harassed by accumulating financial embarrassments and social pressures —the white segregationists stopped speaking to him—he became ill and his wife suffered a nervous breakdown. At a meeting of the congregation last January, he offered to depart in peace if ten hands were raised to demand his resignation. No hands were raised, but he subsequently resigned and will leave June 1.

"I'd have gone long ago if the kids hadn't started this thing with their strike," said the Reverend Griffin when I saw him in the bare living room of the Baptist parsonage, stripped long since of its repossessed furniture. "I've got four young children and I need more income. My service in Farmville has been sacrificial from the beginning." Then, turning to the poetry which he is said to use effectively in the pulpit, he quoted: "Chill penury hath repressed my noble rage."

ROBERT B. CRAWFORD is a tall, lean countryman in his early sixties who exemplifies admirably the solid middle-class white citizenship that the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Rights claim to represent. A devout Presbyterian who for years has taught a popular interdenominational Bible class, Mr. Crawford makes it clear that he didn't lay his Bible down when he became president of the Defenders two years ago.

Born in the cattle and orchard country of the Shenandoah Valley, he was educated as an agronomist and served briefly as a lieutenant in World War I. Later, as a county farm agent, he started Virginia's "Live at Home" movement, aimed at substituting mixed farming for the tobacco monoculture that has depleted much of Virginia's soil resources. His Kilkare Laundry in Farmville is large and prosperous, with routes extending into adjacent counties. It employs Negro workers, but at manual tasks only; to give them office jobs at present, says Mr. Crawford, would stir the anger of the "lower classes of the whites."

Mr. Crawford consented to serve as president of the Defenders, he says, when leading white citizens came to him and said: "Mr. Bob, if we are to avoid the eruption of violence by the lower strata of whites, we must keep the leadership of this movement in responsible hands." With 49 organized chapters and an estimated membership of 10,000, the Defenders feel that they are now well on their way to their announced goal of a chapter in every one of Virginia's 98 counties and cities. Careful screening of applicants, says Mr. Crawford, has kept out the Klu Kluxers and the "nigger haters."

As an organization the Defenders have publicly repudiated economic pressure as a means of penalizing NAACP activists; what individual Defenders may do is another matter. And the organization itself is not above distributing the pamphlet literature of less finicky groups such as the Citizens' Grass Roots Crusade of Carolina and the Citizens Councils of Mississippi. They also circulate some of the learned theological dissertations that cite the Scriptural account of the drunkenness of Noah and the curse pronounced on the sons of Ham as proof that the segregation of the races was part of God's plan and purpose as revealed in the Bible.

Many leading Defenders are members of the county school boards that followed the lead of Prince Edward County in voting

*The local segregationists, including Editor Wall, deny the existence of a gentleman's agreement "to subject the preacher to economic pressure," asserting that repeated efforts were made by white as well as Negro tradesmen to rescue him from his financial difficulties. They also attach no significance to the departure of Prince Edward County's Negro farm agent, also an NAACP activist, whose job was abolished last fall despite the fact that he had been serving 1,200 farmers with admitted competence.

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to close the schools rather than integrate them; over fifty of these boards have petitioned the state Board of Education to forbid integration of the schools anywhere, at any level. Their resistance does not permit compromise in terms of the Supreme Court's implementing requirements of "deliberate speed" or the county and city autonomy envisaged by the recommendations of the Gray Commission.* That, says Mr. Crawford, would enable the camel to get his nose under the tent wall, after which. . . . Mr. William S. Maxey, Jr., executive director of the Defenders, was even more explicit on this point. To permit county or local autonomy in integration, would mean that in the twenty South Side counties, where Negroes constitute a majority of the population but rarely vote, they might eventually exercise their suffrage in sufficient numbers to bring about the implementation of the Supreme Court's order.

Last March, during the concluding sessions of the General Assembly, it was the Defenders who lobbied most energetically for the adoption of the Moore resolution, which declared that "It is the sense of the legislature that for the school year beginning September 1956 the public schools throughout Virginia shall continue to operate on a segregated basis." Passed by the House, the Moore resolution was permitted to die in the Senate.

In the Farmville *Herald,* J. B. Wall deplored the legislature's failure to pass this resolution, which he characterized as "wise and important." Prince Edward County's Defenders also lobbied against the adoption by the legislature of the recommendations of the Gray Commission, whose principal recommendations were (1) that county and city school boards be authorized to assign pupils on the basis of "health and welfare" (rather than race); and (2) that public funds be used for the payment of tuition grants to private schools. The second recommendation required the amendment of the state constitution, which was duly authorized by a two-to-one vote in the popular referendum of January 9, and subsequently enacted by a constitutional convention.

From the point of view of the more intransigent segregationists, the Gray Commission's recommendations were dangerous in that, while enabling the South Side counties to evade, temporarily at least, the Supreme Court's order, they left the way open for the less resistant communities to comply with "all deliberate speed," as several of them had announced their intention of doing.

By doing nothing, the legislature in effect repudiated the Gray Commission; this the majority of Virginia's newspapers denounced as a breach of faith. In effect, the legislature also challenged the NAACP to make the next move, a challenge which Chief Counsel Thurgood Marshall was prompt to accept. In April the NAACP renewed its petition for the relief of the Negro children in the by now celebrated case of Dorothy E. Davis *et al,* versus the Prince Edward County School Board.

A YEAR ago, Prince Edward County's response to the Supreme Court's implementing order was to refuse to adopt a 1955-56 budget; only the minimum required by the state law was at first appropriated. At the same time the county's leading citizens started a campaign to raise by popular subscription funds for the operation of private schools—for whites only. In July, however, a three-judge Federal Court gave the county a temporary reprieve by ruling that it was not practicable, as requested by the NAACP, to place the public school system on a nondiscriminatory basis before the beginning of the school term in September 1956.

The year of grace will soon expire and it is clear that the NAACP will fight its renewal. The Prince Edward County Educational Corporation has $190,000 in pledges made a year ago for the support of a private school system in case it decides to close the

*On August 28, 1954, Virginia's Governor Stanley appointed a legislative commission headed by State Senator Garland Gray to study the problems raised by the Supreme Court decision and to offer recommendations. It reported at the end of 1955.

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public schools rather than desegregate them. Quite possibly it will do just that. In the November 22, 1955, issue of the Farmville *Herald*, editor Wall concluded his strictures on the Gray Commission report, which he considered shamefully expedient, by writing:

"The schools have been chosen as a battlefield by those who would finally and ultimately crush the sovereignty of the states of this union, and centralize all power in the Federal government. Upon this decision rests the future of the United States—its rise or fall. . . .

"The price of expediency on this issue is the ultimate loss of individual liberties and the last vestiges of state sovereignty. Will Virginia submit?"

The answer, in somewhat less dramatic terms, is that Virginia is not the South Side, and that if it is permitted to do so by the Byrd machine, most of Virginia will proceed to desegregate its schools—not happily or hurriedly—but with "all deliberate speed," just as the Supreme Court has ordered.

Meanwhile, Prince Edward County stands adamant, with the whole South Side solidly behind her. The position of these intransigent Defenders at first glance seems to be like that of the man on the cliff who can see no way either to climb up or back down, but who will die if he stays where he is. People standing below shout and point impatiently to a path of escape, but the man on the cliff cannot see, and will not believe or heed.

Prince Edward County's men on the cliff have been shouted at and pushed, as J. B. Wall puts it, as much as they can stand. They are, and know themselves to be, neither fanatics nor demagogues, nor are they ignorant and doltish racists. Many of them, like Robert Crawford and editor Wall, have served on city and county school boards. Others are school administrators who in professional competence and personal quality compare favorably with the average of such professionals in the North. During the past twenty years they have shouldered, with others, the huge task of making up the South's lag in public education for *both* whites and Negroes. During the school year of 1951-52 the thirteen Southern states spent nearly four times as much for school operations as in 1939-40, and about eight times as much for school construction and maintenance. In Prince Edward County, as elsewhere, a disproportionate amount of the steadily increased appropriations was assigned to the Negro schools.

These are the people who tell you, as did one of Farmville's leading citizens: "I fear that desegregation will mean the destruction of our community. We cannot adjust to an integrated society. There are too many white people who are adamant."

One felt compelled to credit the sincerity of these and similar statements by the white community leaders. But it is unlikely that the courts will grant the County another postponement, and it is equally unlikely, despite the fears of the segregationists, that gradual desegregation of the schools will cause serious disturbances in the community. In Norfolk and elsewhere, the Catholics have already proved that it is possible to begin integration in Virginia, even in communities where Negro pupils equal or outnumber the white ones, without experiencing violence or even major difficulties. To say that Prince Edward County can't adjust to an integrated society is in fact to underestimate the authority and capacity of the county's leadership. Here, as elsewhere in Virginia, the Defenders will evade and delay as long as it is practicable—within the law. But, a century after the Civil War, secession has no place in their thoughts, and they are much less likely than in the Deep South to practice or condone nullification by violence of the Supreme Court's decree. They don't like being shouted at. But in the end these men on the cliff will show themselves quite capable of finding their way down, and "the lower strata of the whites" will almost certainly follow them.

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GALYA

A True Story

JULIUS MARGOLIN

HAD it not been for the war, would I have got married in Stolin? There is such a town; it's on the Goryn River, amid forests, far from a railway. I happened to be there by accident.

I was offered work in the forestry office at Stolin. It was wartime, 1940. I was a refugee and had nowhere to go. Stolin sounded all right to me. The Germans were in Warsaw, here we had the Soviets. It was not clear how it would all end. Meantime I got married.

My husband was a big, husky man. A nice fellow. He began nagging me: Let's get married under a canopy according to the Law, otherwise my mother will be scandalized. Stolin is a pious town. But I was stubborn: under no circumstances would I go under the canopy. I am not religious. A civil marriage would do. But he tricked me: "Come to my mother's for tea," Benya said. I came, and everything was in readiness there, a rabbi in a broad hat, all the relatives, children with bouquets. "You silly little goose, don't be bashful. It will only take a minute!" They locked the doors. Under the canopy I burst into tears—out of spite, but all around me they laughed. Through my tears I said to my husband, "Never, never will I forgive you for this!"

Later I went to buy myself clothes. Naturally I did not go to a store. What kind of stores could one find in Soviet Stolin? I went to the former landowner, Olekhnovska. She was an old woman. The Bolsheviks had taken away her husband and sons, and she had come to live in Stolin, on the edge of town. Her little house bordered on the fields. She sold her belongings, that's how she managed to live.

I rang and a maid opened the door, a powerful woman, like a grenadier. "What do you want?" I replied sweetly, "I have to see Madame Olekhnovska on business."

Olekhnovska came out: a graying woman, of proud bearing, in mourning. The Poles were having a rough time then, and she was an aristocrat, a *pani,* in the bargain.

"I am a refugee from Warsaw. I lost all my things, nothing left to wear. Won't you sell me something?"

The maid returned from the kitchen, wiped her hands, and sat down at the table. I could see I had made a mistake. She was obviously not a plain peasant woman, but a relative. A conversation developed. I began to like everything about the house. The rooms were clean and homey. I had heard many good things about Olekhnovska. Hardly ten minutes passed before we became friends. I tried on some clothes, I turned around before the mirror, I laughed. They served tea with jam.

"How nice everything is here," I said. "It's so pleasant one hates to leave."

"Then don't go," Olekhnovska said. "Maka, wrap up these two dresses for her. Take them, don't be afraid. We won't quarrel about the price. The person is important, not the money."

That's how the friendship between us began. I went to buy dresses and bought—life. Two months later they picked up old

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THIS is a chapter from a book in progress. Though cast in fictional form, the story of Galya is a substantially true one; its heroine, who now lives in Haifa, told it to the author herself. JULIUS MARGOLIN, who lives in Israel, is no stranger to these pages. In December 1952 we published an excerpt in translation from his book, *La Condition Inhumaine* (Paris 1949), on his experiences in Russian slave-labor camps, where he spent five years; and his article "Do We Leave the Russian Jews to Their Fate?" appeared in our October 1953 issue.

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Olekhnovska at night. It was only to be expected—wasn't she a landowner's wife? I had an acquaintance in the NKVD, a quiet and courteous man. I ran to him: "Why did they take her? It must be a mistake!" But he answered: "I am surprised at you, Comrade Galya. She is a class enemy, and if she is sympathetic and good that only makes it worse. The Soviet regime especially dislikes sympathetic landowners. Leave her. Her case is lost."

"That's like it is with the Nazis," I said. "All Jews have to be dark and have beaked noses, and if a blond and blue-eyed one shows up it's so much the worse for him—he's the first to be liquidated."

My NKVD friend stared at me with his eyes bulging: "Comrade Galya, don't ever make such comparisons. For your own good. And as for your Olekhnovska, the hell with her, I'll arrange for packages."

That's how Maka and I began sending food and clothes to her in prison and were able to get her soiled clothes to launder.

One evening, unpacking one such bundle of clothes, I noticed a piece of tape, and I pulled it out. Penciled on it were the words: "Help me."

How help her? What were they doing with her? We did not know and couldn't guess. Next morning we went to the gate of the prison with the bundle of laundry.

There was a crowd at the gate. "They're being led out!" The gate opened. About two hundred people were marched out, five to a row, bundles on their backs, old, young, all kinds. Olekhnovska was at the end of a file. Her cheeks had caved in, her kerchief hung over her eyebrows, her face looked mad. I shouted over the heads of the guards, through their bayonets: "Your laundry! Your laundry!"

A guard raised the butt of his rifle: "Look out, or you'll go with them."

Terror seized me and Maka. We both stayed where we were. "That's the end of Olekhnovska!" Tears poured down our faces. We returned to the empty little house at the edge of the fields.

"That's the end of Olekhnovska!"

Two weeks passed and I began to argue with Maka: "You mustn't stay at home without work. Why attract attention to yourself? Go get some work. Work in the forestry office."

"But I don't know anything."

"A lot that matters. None of us knew anything at first. I'll show you. You'll keep accounts. Aren't you literate?"

MAKA began to work in the forestry office. She had a good head, practical. A month hardly passed and my Maka began to be promoted. She was bookkeeper, she was economist, she was boss—scarcely a chair was moved in the forestry office without her consent.

But no sooner had we arranged a peaceful life for ourselves than Hitler made his appearance. War broke out. News was brought that the Germans were coming. The end of June was hot. The Goryn River became shallow. Heat lightning flickered. With each passing day and night the panic mounted: the Germans were in Brest; the Germans were in Kobrin. At first the Soviet representatives were silent and, looking at them, we too said nothing. Our fright really began on the day we saw trucks in front of the City Council. They were going away! What would happen to us?

The Soviet authorities had no time for us. They evacuated four Jews in all from Stolin, local big shots. Many others scurried to find horses and wagons. The next day a long convoy left Stolin in the direction of the Russian border. It consisted of about a hundred wagons. All the young people left, and whoever else did not want to fall into the hands of the Germans. My husband, Benya, also left. Before his departure I gave him my word that I would look after his mother. We bid each other farewell without having any idea how long our separation might last.

But the fugitives did not get far. They were halted at the Soviet frontier: "Who are you? In wartime it is not permissible to clog the roads. Turn back!" Explanations did no good. After standing near the frontier for

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half a day, the convoy of Jews from Stolin returned, straight into the jaws of the advancing German army. As the wagons rolled slowly through the silent Byelo-Russian villages, the peasants stared with amazement at the funereal procession. At dawn they were back in Stolin. The Bolsheviks had all gone. The Jews stayed in the background. Looting had begun. The Germans were expected any moment.

The gates to the NKVD prison hung open now. Twenty corpses lay along the fence—prisoners shot before the departure of the Russians. Maka and I stole into the prison yard. We looked for Irene.

All Stolin knew Irene. She was a girl of eighteen, remarkably beautiful, a Polish patriot and daring as only a character in one of Sienkiewicz's novels could be. Her family had been deported long before. She was detained. It was her own fault—imagine who she decided to start up with. Sitting in her cell, she sang as loudly as she could *"Jeszcze Polska Nie Sginela"*—the Polish national anthem. When we heard that Irene was among those shot in the prison yard, Maka's first thought was, "Let's go and bury her."

We found Irene's body, put it on a stretcher and carried it out through the gate. We were in a hurry. I was especially afraid. That's all I needed, to come across the Germans while carrying such a burden. I, a Jew. We went out of the town to the edge of the forest and dug a pit under a tree. I did not dare look at her—her whole chest was black. What had they done to her before killing her? Maka crossed herself, and we left as fast as we could.

Three days later the Germans entered Stolin. There were not many—just four of them in a car. But it was enough—four Germans to the eight thousand Jews of Stolin.

In the summer morning the Jews were called together in the market square. A German official addressed them from the balcony of the City Council building.

"You so and so's, you vicious, harmful, useless people! You don't want to work and nobody wants you. You are to blame for everything. You are notorious warmongers. But we will make you work and obey. And beginning tomorrow every one of you will wear a yellow star."

A dead silence hung over the square. Young and old stood with lowered heads.

"Surrender your coats and all valuables," continued the German. "Hand in your gold and your money. Beginning tomorrow you must not walk on the sidewalks. Walk in the middle of the street, and for all I care, you'd better not show yourself at all."

The crowd stood in dead silence with lowered heads. The following day the Germans set up a *Judenrat* and a "Jewish police force" to enforce their orders. The nightmare began.

Some days later Stolin was flooded with thousands of Jewish women and children from Davidgorodok nineteen miles away. Partisans had appeared in their neighborhood. There might have been some Jews among them. It was not known who did the shooting, but the vengeance that followed was swift. All Jewish males over twelve in Davidgorodok were rounded up and taken to the outskirts of the town, and all of them—between two and three thousand—were shot. The women and children were ordered to leave the place in an hour. Any Jew found in Davidgorodok would be shot.

It was a sight to see them come, a crazed mob of old women and newly widowed younger ones, many of them with babies in their arms, and little girls dragging smaller children after them—thousands of women with dishevelled hair, so petrified with fear that they could neither cry out nor shed tears. The Germans had not given them time to weep. All night they streamed along the road from Davidgorodok to Stolin like a procession of ghosts. The peasants they met crossed themselves in fright and made way for them. Some of the peasant women gave them bread and water. Others cursed them and set their dogs on them.

I HAD to take work as a servant. Maka hired me as a maid. At that time Jews and Gentiles could no longer live together, but

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Maka got permission to select a Jewish woman for a servant, and I stayed with her, and when all the Jews were locked up in a ghetto she got me a pass. During the day I worked in her home, at night I returned to the ghetto. It was then that the Jews began selling all their possessions for food, and the transactions were handled through me. I brought the things to Maka, and she traded them to her neighbors. I was afraid to carry the food to the ghetto myself. Maka would follow me on the opposite side of the street till we reached the ghetto fence, and then, choosing a propitious moment, she would throw the bags of flour and grits over the fence. That's how we fed ourselves in the ghetto.

Somebody must have informed the Germans that Maka was friendly with me, for one of them came to check whether I was really a servant. I was standing near the oven making dinner when a tall, lean German with sunken cheeks came in. I was afraid to look at him. "What are you doing here?" "I am cooking dinner." The German went up to the oven, raised the lid from the pot and sniffed at the contents. He must have liked the smell. He seemed about to say something. I supposed he would ask for a spoon. But he controlled himself. He sniffed once more, waved his hand and left.

When the Jews were removing to the ghetto, they had had to abandon their homes, furniture, basements stocked with food, and other things, and go to a neighborhood at the edge of town where only the poorest people had lived before. The ancient Jewish town of Stolin itself was made purely "Aryan" by noon of that day. But in the ghetto they found an unexpected boon—the vegetable gardens planted next to almost every one of the squalid shacks. The former owners had left potatoes, onions, cucumbers growing in them. Even some fowl had been left behind. The first few days the Jewish women tried to lure the chickens by calling "Tzip, tzip, tzip." But the chickens did not know Yiddish and would not come until they heard the call used by the peasants, "Ooh, ooh, ooh."

Eight thousand Jews lived behind the ghetto's barbed wire fence. Gradually rumors began reaching us of a kind that nobody could or would believe: stories of what had happened in Sarny and what had been done to the Jews in Visotzk. There were young people among us who wanted to get weapons, to flee to the forest, to organize resistance. But it was too late. They had the will, but lacked the know-how and the decision. There was no one to call "Ooh, ooh, ooh" to them. Besides, the rabbi of Stolin had decided otherwise.

Thus said the rabbi of Stolin, pillar of Israel: "Don't dare! As we have lived so shall we die, according as God wills it. Is a forest a place for Jews? What are we, wolves? Our place was and remains in the house of prayer."

My pass was good only till six in the evening. One evening Maka refused to let me go. That same evening an SS detachment came to Stolin and surrounded the ghetto. I remained outside, on the "Aryan" side. Maka had deceived me by saying she had gotten permission to keep me at her home overnight. When night fell, she left the house, locking me in.

All night I lay awake in the dark, listening. The wind tore at the shutters. I thought I heard shooting in the distance. Maka did not return. Could it be that partisans had entered the town? Or had drunken Germans fired the shots? Why was Maka still not home?

At dawn there was a strange silence as if the whole town were dead. I wrung my hands. There was not a sound outside; the street was deserted.

Maka returned at nine in the morning. I was terrified when I looked at her. Her face was white, her lips blue.

"Maka, I want to go home, to the ghetto."

"There isn't any more ghetto, Galya. No one is left alive."

I was frozen. Maka looked at me strangely, as if we were both in a dream.

"What are you saying?" I said, without hearing myself talk.

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I did not hear her answer. But I already knew that all were dead—my poor husband among them—and that my own turn would come soon. I wanted to wake up, but could not. Maka was first to rouse herself. I saw her eyelids tremble, then her eyes came to life and assumed a human expression. She touched my arm.

"What are we to do, Maka?"

"There is nothing to do. Wait till it passes."

That was the simplest solution—to wait. But Maka had said, "Wait till it passes," as if she hadn't quite understood what she was saying. To wait till the war was over, to survive Hitler and the evil that had deluged half the world—was that what she meant?

She led me by the arm into the other room. There were two rooms in all, and in the first, which one entered from the hall, stood a large basket. It was a wicker basket for laundry, with a lid that didn't quite fit. It was a yard long and about two feet wide.

It was the only place in which I could hide. There was no time to look for another. Had the Germans found me in Maka's house, they would have killed both of us. I curled up in the basket. Maka dropped an apple in. The lid went down. Maka covered the basket with a long embroidered peasant towel. There I lay and waited for the Germans to leave Stolin.

I WAITED for a year and a half. Don't be surprised. You can live in a laundry basket if the alternative is a German bullet. I wasn't so much afraid of death itself as of falling into the hands of the Germans.

I lay in the basket on my back, my knees up and my feet resting against one of the sides. With difficulty I could move and even turn, and I could stay in this position about three hours. The basket stood in a corner so that it was not visible from the window. This was important because people going by, and especially acquaintances, often looked in through it. We did not dare close the shutters of the window for fear of attracting attention. Only in the evening, once it was dark, could I get out. During the day I lay in the basket in the empty house waiting for Maka to come back from work. When it became intolerable, I would open the lid and sit awhile. The first two days I ate nothing. I couldn't collect my thoughts. The third day I ate the apple.

That same day neighbors called on Maka. They talked about me.

"Galya also perished. A pity about her."

But Maka said: "Find someone else to pity. Such a frivolous girl, a goat, an unstable person."

"The Jews were all Communists. It will be better without them."

But Maka said: "Let's wait and see if the Germans are better than the Jews."

Then they chorused: "Oh, what a terrible people! Such barbarism has never been seen before. Who knows what will happen to us if the Germans win the war?"

I lay in my basket in the other room and listened.

Some days later someone claimed to have seen me being led to execution. "Policemen in thick coats led Galya, and she was barefoot and undressed, and her face was bloody!"

"A pity about Galya," the hearers said.

I pitied that other "Galya," my sister in fate if not in fact, a person just like me. Did it matter what her name was? But I wanted to live. Oh, how I wanted to live. One to survive of all the rest. One against all the rest. The mere fact that I breathed was a triumph. And Maka was with me.

After the "liquidation" of the ghetto the Germans collected all the possessions of the victims, sent the better things off to Germany, and distributed the rest to the local people. I pleaded with Maka: "Go get something. Maybe you'll find something that can be used. This way we don't even have a rag to wipe the floor with." Maka went and came back with a package. We opened it that evening.

First we found a vest, an old, worn and stained vest with some of the buttons missing. A stub of pencil stuck out of one of the pockets. Then there was something crumpled together. We unfolded it and it

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turned out to be children's shirts, three of them.

Something broke within me. Till that moment, I hadn't shed a tear. Now my heart tore loose from its moorings and I wept hysterically. Maka, though a stolid woman and not given to emotional outbursts, shook all over and her color changed. She grabbed the package and threw it into the fire.

At the very beginning we had decided that I would escape into the forest, to the partisans. Weeks passed in anticipation. It was necessary first to establish contact, then to steal out of town. I kept on nagging Maka: When do I go into the forest?

Every day we risked our lives. I wanted to relieve Maka of the tension, and I was sick of the basket. What kind of a life was it, in a basket? Whatever else happened, my place was with the partisans, in their wintry clearings deep in the forest—cold but free.

MAKA made cautious inquiries. Finally the time came. One winter night we stole out of town into the fields and, following a ravine, came to the forest. Maka went in front; I followed her with a broom and swept away our footsteps in the snow. We went deep into the forest, where the wind died down. All was silent. We reached a clearing and Maka hid me in some bushes. "Sit here; they will come for you."

She went away and I was left alone. I sat in the snow and waited. I wore felt boots and three kerchiefs around my head. Above, the sky was starless, silent, without a ray of light.

A day passed and a night, and another day and night. Nobody came. I began to freeze. During the day woodpeckers pounded away in the thickets; at night the owls hooted. I had no strength to get up. I slept much. I'd wake up and think: "Maka has abandoned me. I'll die here. I'll fall asleep and won't wake up again."

On the evening of the third day I heard someone walking. It was dark and I could not see who it was, but then I recognized Maka's voice: "Hey you, frozen? Come on, lively!"

She handed me a bottle of hot milk and lifted me to my feet. But I trembled and could hardly put one foot in front of the other. We walked a considerable distance. We stumbled, sat down to rest, then walked again for about two hours. Then we reached a clearing with a tent in it. A horse was tethered to it, and a peasant stood outside in a sheepskin coat and a hood. He carried an automatic rifle. He was a partisan.

"Halt. Who are you?"

"Women, comrade," Maka answered. "Friends."

The peasant came up close. His face was very young, his eyebrows were covered with hoar-frost.

"Take her to headquarters, comrade. She is a Jew, the only one saved from the ghetto."

The peasant looked at me sideways and said nothing. In his silence I sensed spite, irritation, hostility. In a breaking voice I said, "Take me, I'll be useful."

"What do you think we have here, a hospital? What could we use you for?" Then to Maka: "Take her back where you brought her from. Lively, now. I don't want you around here, damn you. And I don't want to have to say it again."

He raised his automatic. I wanted to lie down in the snow. Let him shoot. Why should I go on living and torment others? Maka stared into the peasant's face, then looked at me. "Let's go home, Galya."

It was getting light when we slipped through the fences into the yard and went into the kitchen. Now it makes me laugh to recall it. I ate a piece of pork with a large piece of bread and lay down in my basket, fed, contented. This was home—my basket and my friend Maka. After the three nights in the forest, I was happy to be back in the basket. The bedding was soft. Nothing more was needed except to sleep and sleep. By the time Maka returned from work in the evening I had recovered completely. There was Maka, with her big behind, square-cut like a chest of drawers, and I alongside her like a kitten.

"You, Galya, if you were thrown off a roof you'd land on your feet."

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THE town appeared to have been deserted. The empty streets were silent. Few policemen were to be seen, and the Gestapo did not put in an appearance. Stolin was not the same as Warsaw, where people were hunted day and night, everyone's face was scanned, and voluntary detectives spied on every apartment. In Stolin there were much fewer people, and they were simpler. All through 1943 I lay in the laundry basket, hidden away from the world behind locked doors, and nobody suspected that Maka was concealing anything.

What's more, Maka became friendly with a German, a quiet, solid citizen who served as a civil official in the town. It was an intimate affair—Maka made no pretense to being a nun. Before the German came we would move the basket into the closet that was near the hall. It was a cold closet and Maka would cover me with a coat. I would lock myself from the inside and wait till the German left, which would usually be at dawn. I would hear him slip the bolt of the door of the hall. Then I would get up and bolt it after him, and run and climb into Maka's warm bed. Hardly opening her eyes, she would continue her deep, peaceful genuinely "Aryan" sleep.

Only once did we have a scare. This happened when Dasha, an old peasant woman, came to Stolin from her village. We had both known Dasha well. She used to bring butter and eggs to sell. I lay in my basket and listened to her conversation with Maka. Then Maka went out and Dasha remained alone in the room. Dasha was a devoted and completely trustworthy friend. But who could tell how honest and decent a person would be, left alone in an empty apartment?

The old peasant woman sat for a time and sighed. Then she went up to the mirror and stood before it for a good while. She opened the bottle of perfume and sniffed at it. Then I heard her opening the dresser drawers. After that she went into the kitchen and looked into the pot. From the kitchen she went into the small room near the hall, the one in which I was concealed, and stopped near the basket. My breathing died down. She stood near the basket for a long time without making a sound. I was beginning to think that she had left the room, when she slowly and cautiously raised the lid and looked inside.

I lay on my back, knees uplifted, and stared directly into her overhanging, wrinkled face. We had not seen each other for a year and a half. My face was greenish, my eyes wide open like a specter's. Dasha stood bent over a moment, then, without uttering a sound, collapsed to the floor. She had fainted. I got out of the basket, stepped over her, and ran to the hall to lock the outside door.

A quarter of an hour later, when Maka returned, we made Dasha swear before an icon that she would never breathe a word. Both our lives were in her hands now. We tried to frighten her as much as we could. For one thing she was a friend. Besides, she believed in God, and knew that the Germans had lost the war—they had already been driven back across the Dnieper. Nevertheless we could not help being made uneasy by the fact that a third person knew about me.

In the end I got so used to living in the basket that I even got myself a little dog to help while away the boredom of staying under lock and key in an empty apartment. By this time the Russians were only seventy miles from Stolin. The white, friendly little puppy would race about the place. Maka called him "Tiny," but I named him "Tiutik." He became very attached to me and got used to the idea that my place was in the basket. But he could not understand that this was a secret. During the day he would skip about the basket barking and wagging his tail. It was pleasant but dangerous to have him around. Had the war lasted much longer we would have had to get rid of him. But 1944 was at hand.

EARLY in 1944, German rule in Stolin came to an end. The Germans retreated slowly, like a beast with a broken back. Long before their departure they began to quiet down and stopped terrorizing people. Their

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chief officials left, then their police vanished. The population of the town was prepared for evacuation. Maka got ready to go. As a Pole she had no reason to stay behind to greet the Bolsheviks. Her road led west to Poland.

Then came a night when artillery boomed, machine guns fired constantly, and trucks roared by. Maka and I were certain that Partisans or units of the Red Army had entered town. Early in the morning Maka went to find out. Suddenly I heard Russian being spoken outside the window. It passed over me like a flame. There could no longer be any doubt: the Soviet forces had taken Stolin. I carefully looked through the window: soldiers were standing before the door. They began pounding on it with their rifle butts and shouting, "Open up!" Without thinking an instant, I unlocked the door: "Come in, comrades."

Gray uniforms, sheepskin hats, Russian faces. It was so long since I had seen people's faces.

"Why did you lock yourself in?"

"I was afraid. I was alone in the house."

"I'll bet you didn't lock yourself from the Germans."

"What are you saying, comrades! Three years we've waited for you. You're our liberators."

One of them, a tall, black-bearded man, came up close to me:

"Who do you take us for?"

I said nothing.

"Who are we? Answer!"

"You are Russians, naturally, Russian soldiers."

I was frightened. My legs shook. I didn't understand a thing. A chill went through my heart.

"We're not the ones you are expecting. We are Vlasovites."

But I had no idea what Vlasovites were. It was the first time I had heard the name.

"Please explain. I never heard about Vlasovites," and I trembled all over.

"We are for Russia. We are against kolkhozes and sheenies."

Everything turned dark before me. I couldn't understand. Some others came up. "What is she jabbering?"

But the black-bearded one, who was their leader, shouldered me aside: "The girl lost her head out of fright. Go on, go ahead and get us something to eat."

I went into the kitchen and Tiutik ran after me. I stood over the pots and tears streamed from my eyes. What a terrible world that knew no mercy. Now the Russians had come and they too were "against kolkhozes and sheenies." What was one to do with oneself?

The commander came in after me: "What are you bawling about, silly?"

"If you were the only one here waiting for the Reds to come we'd finish you fast. But that's just the trouble, you hear the same story in every house, and—well, you can't shoot everybody."

I lost all control and cried out: "Kill me! I don't want to live! I haven't told you everything about myself."

"So that's how it is! All right, give out, tell everything just as it is."

"I'm a Jew!" I cried out.

He clapped his hand over my mouth: "Don't holler!"

He looked around to see if I had been overheard, then closed the kitchen door, moved a stool to the table, and said: "Don't get excited, sit down and tell me how you managed to survive. And don't be afraid of me."

I TOLD the whole story from the beginning, how Maka saved me, how I had lived in a basket for a year and a half. I talked and I wept. I had no handkerchief. A washcloth lay on the table. I wiped my eyes with an end of it. The commander wiped his with the other end, for he was crying like a child.

"If she saved you, that means you deserved it. If you've survived this far, it's your fate to live. We won't touch you."

He took a cross from his neck and handed it to me. "I'm a simple man. Believe me, I want to live, too. I want to come back to my wife and children. You think we're so happy fighting next to the Germans against

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our own people? Fate is playing games with us. All we want is peace, peace for everybody, on our own soil, without oppressors. Take this cross. My wife gave it to me. It's saved me thus far and it will save you from misfortune. And give me something in return, as a remembrance—anything you choose."

I had nothing to give him. Maka had a ring, a plain ring with a blue stone, so I gave it to him. It didn't even fit his little finger.

At this point Maka rushed in shouting: "Who gave you permission? Who allowed you to break in here and make yourself at home?" Then she saw me with the commander, and she lost her speech from fright.

The Vlasovite went up to her and put his arm around her shoulder. "I know everything. You are a hero. There aren't many like you in the world. But see to it that Galya keeps her tongue on a leash in the future. A misfortune almost happened. And you won't have to wait long. The Reds are already this side of Visotzk."

Some days later Maka left Stolin. The town was deserted. Only frail old women remained. They went into hiding. The houses were inspected to see who remained. All doors had to remain open, and our house stood gaping. Maka took along whatever she could, but left me a supply of food. A hiding place was fixed up for me in the chimney.

There I hid for a week. All around was emptiness and fear—not a soul anywhere. It was like a No Man's Land where only marauders and patrols wandered around. Tiutik dashed about the deserted yard, unable to comprehend what had happened to all the people. Had anyone spied me in my hiding place he might have taken me for a witch about to take off on a broom into the night sky.

On the seventh day I heard Tiutik barking furiously and somebody calling him: "Tiny!" Only Maka used to call him by that name. And it was Maka. She came into the kitchen and shouted up the chimney: "Alive yet? Come down, quick."

I climbed down, letting my feet dangle first and looking for a foothold, but Maka grabbed them and yanked me downward and I descended in a cloud of soot and dust, like a real witch, sneezing violently, and as black as a chimney sweep. I sat down on the edge of the oven. Maka roared with laughter.

How she laughed! She held her sides, her face was beet-red and tears streamed down her cheeks. Her thick legs were planted apart, her mouth was wide open, and her face was all wrinkles as she gave herself to gales of insane laughter.

I looked at her and burst into laughter too.

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THE PERENNIAL SPINOZA

Radical Philosopher

FELIX WELTSCH

THREE hundred years ago, in 1656, the Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam proclaimed: "In accordance with the judgment of the angels and the decision of the elders, and with the consent of God and this holy community, we hereby excommunicate, expel, curse, and anathematize Baruch de Spinoza. . . ." About two years ago Premier David Ben Gurion of Israel published an article in which he proposed that the tercentenary of Spinoza's excommunication serve as the occasion for an official revocation of that ban. Ben Gurion also suggested that the Hebrew University undertake the publication of Spinoza's collected works in Hebrew. (Actually, a new edition of Spinoza's *Ethics*, translated by Jacob Klatzkin, had already been made available some time before. When this translation first appeared, Franz Rosenzweig wrote that in many respects it expressed Spinoza's meaning better than the philosopher himself had been able to do in the original Latin.)

Ben Gurion's article provoked a heated debate. In Holland the *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad* protested sharply against the idea of lifting the ban of excommunication. In Israel, too, many voices were raised in defense of the Amsterdam synagogue. Rosenzweig tells us, incidentally, that Hermann Cohen, the great German Jewish philosopher, once justified the act of excommunication, declaring that the community had every right to expel a blasphemer and atheist.

The debate over Spinoza recurs periodically among Jews as well as in the world at large, for Spinoza has always been the object either of profound reverence or intense revulsion. In his lifetime he was both excommunicated and worshipped; after his death he was for a time utterly forgotten ("like a dog," says Lessing), and then once more studied and honored by men as great as Goethe.

Of course, it is the fate of every important thinker to be blessed by some and damned by others, but there is a peculiar irony in the fact that Spinoza, the most dispassionate of all philosophers, should have kindled such passionate responses. That his work tampered with the nerve centers of Jewish religious belief and national pride is one way of accounting for this. Quite naturally we Jews should like to be able to claim him as our own. Yet how can we say he is ours when he renounced Judaism (as it was then practiced) no less than the Jewish community? This difficult question we shall not now consider, since it would involve us in a dispute over the validity of particular conceptions of religion and nationality. But there is a more strictly philosophic basis for the continuing Spinoza controversy which is of interest to us here.

THE truth is that Spinoza the gentle, Spinoza the enemy of the passions, was one of the most radical philosophers who ever lived. He seized on a certain philosophic possibility and, with unprecedented consistency, thought it through to the end. His position on the most decisive metaphysical questions was wholly unequivocal—no one is *less* a philosopher of the mean. He renounced the middle ground, not only in religion, but in epistemology and ethics as well.

FELIX WELTSCH was for twenty years editor of the Zionist weekly *Selbstwehr* in Prague, and member of an intellectual circle that included Franz Kafka and Max Brod. He is the author of several books on philosophy and political theory, and currently is on the staff of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

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To begin with epistemology. The problem of knowledge centers on the question: is there a knowledge which can satisfy the innate human desire for certainty, a perception of phenomena so acquired as to carry with it the conviction that what is perceived could not possibly be otherwise? Until a short time ago—and in any case in Spinoza's day—mathematics and geometry were considered the realm of such unquestionable perceptions. Consequently the problem of knowledge could be stated in terms of mathematics: can the world be known *more geometrico*? Spinoza's answer to this question was an emphatic yes, and he proceeded to demonstrate it by presenting his metaphysics and ethics *more geometrico*.

Opposed to his view is the conviction that we cannot gain any real knowledge of the world by imitating the methods of mathematics, that the very desire to do so is quite meaningless. According to this school of thought, all we can do is *observe* phenomena in the hope of discovering certain dependencies which allow us to predict particular sequences of events with a high degree of probability. There is nothing else. This, roughly, is the doctrine of modern positivism. Between the two there are a great many midpositions, of which the best known is Kant's theory of *a priori* synthetic judgment. Kant holds that we can have *a priori* (and therefore intelligible) knowledge of phenomena because the experience which gives us this knowledge has in the first place been shaped by the structure of our reason; *a priori* knowledge, in other words, is both perceived and created by reason.

Now on this axis of polarity Spinoza's position is one of unqualified extremism. He stands for a radical rationalism in metaphysics. This, however, does not mean that Spinoza believes man can know everything through reason. According to one of Spinoza's axioms, only two of the infinite number of God's attributes are accessible to us at all, extension and thought—that is to say, nature and spirit. Moreover, Spinoza tells us that man has, at best, only confused conceptions which hinder adequate knowledge. But where knowledge exists—and genuine knowledge, says Spinoza, does exist, and can always be raised to greater completeness—it is adequate, encompassing the real nature of its object and providing an insight into the necessity of the object. Thus it is a knowledge which perfectly fulfills the requirements of reason.

How does Spinoza arrive at so radically rational a metaphysics? He begins by elaborating a set of "definitions and axioms" from which all else can be logically deduced. At the outset, therefore, we find him confining within his definitions all those metaphysical problems which have always resisted solution by rational methods, which torment human thought and will always torment it, thus rendering them powerless to disturb the logical development of his system. All doubt and paradox are shut up in these bristling axioms as in a fortress. The rest is left to logic and the magnificent apparatus of Spinoza's deduction. In the center of this conceptual fortress stands the idea of the "self-caused" eternal "substance" which necessarily exists because its "essence includes existence," and whose existence must be *evident* because existence is an element of its concept. Spinoza did not find this magic formula for himself; he came upon it in Scholastic philosophy, more particularly in St. Anselm's famous "ontological proof of God," perhaps the most honorable of all the intellectual tricks the mind of man has ever contrived.

THE result of Spinoza's method is one of the grandest constructions of the human spirit, a system whose deeply religious quality has exerted a profound influence on many great minds. The completeness and clarity of this intellectual structure truly exerts an effect like that of the starry heavens, tranquillizing and exalting. But this is not to say that those who are moved by Spinoza's vision of the world—i.e. the *results* of his system—thereby become adherents of the system itself; very few followers of Spinoza have accepted his definitions and inferences in detail. As an example, we may take the most

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famous of Spinoza's admirers, Goethe, who declared: "It should not be thought, however, that I could subscribe to Spinoza's writings and declare my literal belief in them. Who could understand a man who, as Descartes' pupil, lifted himself, through mathematical and rabbinical learning, to the summits of thought, who to this very day still seems to represent the goal of all speculative endeavor?"

Spinoza's system is a logical creation. It is therefore natural to ask how *modern* logic feels about it. What Hans Reichenbach, one of the best-known representatives of modern scientific logic, says on the subject in his book, *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy,* is a characteristic expression of great sympathy evoked by Spinoza the man and thinker, and a complete rejection of his logical deductions. (A similar judgment was made by Fritz Mautner, the now almost forgotten precursor of modern logical and linguistic philosophy, in his book on Spinoza.) Reichenbach writes: "Among philosophers Spinoza enjoys a high reputation; I think this reputation is more the merit of his personality than of his philosophy. . . . His ethics, separated from its logical form, represents the creed of a dispassionate personality to whom self-control and intellectual work appear as the highest good. By projecting his ethics into logic, he reveals that his admiration for logic was greater than his abilities in it; in fact, the logic of his derivations is poor, and they cannot be understood without many tacit additions and psychological interpretations. By no means can his system be regarded as at least internally valid, that is, as correctly derived from his axioms. . . . Had Spinoza foreseen this result of the modern philosophy of mathematics, he would not have attempted to construct his ethics after the pattern of geometry."

"But," Reichenbach goes on, "invalid logical constructions can still have the psychological function of strengthening subjective beliefs, and fallacious reasoning can be the indispensable instrument of a creed." And one final observation of Reichenbach's: "The Socratic intellectualization of ethics was . . . used by him . . . for the construction of an ethics that disparages emotion. . . . From the time of the Stoics the conception of the philosopher as a man without passion has dominated public opinion . . . but I do not see why the rest of us, whose pleasures are of a more human variety, should feel inferior. What makes life worth living is passion; this rule applies to philosophers, too, and it looks as though Spinoza's unfortunate passion for logic was not so different from the more sensational forms in which passion manifests itself in other persons."

THIS invasion of the ethical domain by the logician is the keynote of Spinoza's ethical philosophy. The questions of ethics are: What can man do? How is man to act? What does the occasional moral decision made by a man actually mean? Can we speak of a *real* action, a *real* intervention into events, a *realization* of values, if all action is determined, if everything happens by necessity? On these questions, too, Spinoza assumes a radical stance. For him, there can be no state of "becoming," since that which exists is always and only eternal "being." In Spinoza's philosophy, the verse, "There is nothing new under the sun," takes on absolute significance. Whatever happens comes about by the most rigorous necessity; and the fact of this necessity turns all "becoming," and hence all human action, into mere "modifications" of being, stages in which being "expresses" itself. How then can we speak of ethics if no genuine action is possible? It was this question Nietzsche had in mind when he made his coarse but pointed criticism of Spinoza: "What is *amor,* what is *deus,* if every drop of blood is missing?" But Spinoza does make room for one human act in this most finished of all worlds: the act of knowing. It is the only process that does not contradict the necessity of all events, for it is the knowledge of necessity itself.

With this notion, Spinoza allows for the possibility of human action and defines its meaning: more perfect knowledge. To achieve adequate conceptions rather than

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confused ones is not only the path to virtue, but the very happiness which, for Spinoza, is the ultimate goal of all being. Our emotions are based on confused ideas; by transforming them into clear conceptions—i.e. *knowledge*—we conquer our passions. If we know the causes of suffering, we can conquer suffering. The more complete our knowledge becomes, the more fully it transforms itself into love. And so the cornerstone of Spinoza's ethics is the love of God—that is, the love with which God loves himself.

Now whatever its theoretical difficulties, to say that true human action is limited to the knowedge of necessity can lead to a noble and successful practical ethics. The ethic that Spinoza the philosopher taught, Spinoza the man lived, and there is a beauty in his life which dazzled even his enemies. Everyone feels the "boundless unselfishness that shines from his every sentence." Here stands a man who has conquered passion and freed himself from the love of gain, who is content with the barest necessities and will take from his friends only enough to keep himself alive; a learned man who refuses a flattering call from a university, who does not wish to become Professor Spinoza; a man who fights for intellectual freedom because without it there can be no knowledge of necessity; a man who teaches that human beings, like all living creatures, strive for happiness because he has learned that the only happiness is the pursuit and possession of knowledge. Spinoza taught and lived an ethic of selflessness in external things, of freedom in spiritual, and of love in Godly things. No wonder he became for Goethe "a saint whom I looked up to."

We found above that Spinoza's metaphysics violate the canons of formal logic. Here we can see how he stands in utter opposition to the other great stream of modern philosophy—existentialism. The limitation of all genuine action to the act of knowing contradicts the existential situation of contemporary man who, according to the existentialist creed, is concerned not with knowledge but with the adoption of an attitude, the definition of a relationship "toward." In other words, Spinoza, to whom the knowledge of God was everything, nevertheless deprived man of an essential element of religious reality: the "approachability" of God, as Buber calls it, his "dialogue" relation with God.

What makes Spinoza's love of God so different from the love which Buber, Rosenzweig, and the later Hermann Cohen understood as the true relation to God? Rosenzweig's answer is this: "The Spinozist loves his neighbor because he knows that man in general, all men, or the world in general, all things, are kin. Against such a love, which springs from the essential, the universal, stands the other, whose source is in the individual experience, the deepest essence of all." And Cohen (as quoted by Rosenzweig) gives this account: "The human being who stands before God is no longer the self of ethics . . . but the real human being, in the need and suffering of his sin-entangled actuality, and the thought of eternity can be no consolation, no help to him." Therefore, the "pedantic leveling" of pantheism angers Cohen. He never tires of attacking Spinoza's famous dictum that man cannot demand to be loved by God in return. (Goethe, on the other hand, was especially pleased by this side of Spinoza—"What is it to You, if I love You?") Buber, for the same reasons, accuses Spinoza of helping the peoples of the world to cast off the "Thou-I" relationship to God, which Israel, out of her innermost essence, gave them through Christianity.

SPINOZA has earned many admirers, but not a single follower. Though he founded no school he remains a milestone in the spiritual history of mankind. No one was completely convinced by his teachings, but the best were influenced by them. Philosophy has developed beyond Spinoza, and, in our time, against Spinoza, but without his work this development could not have taken place. How is this so?

The mighty conceptual structure reared by Spinoza rests, as we have seen, on a set of previously laid down definitions and axi-

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oms, which we have likened to conceptual fortresses. Spinoza offers no proof of these axioms; he presents them as self-evident, as if they were self-revelations of the truth. Here later philosophers could not follow him. They saw no way for finite man to know the laws of infinite being, to grasp the unity of the universe through the intuitions of reason. But we do retain another thing: the belief in this unity. And the greatness of Spinoza's thought remains undiminished even if we substitute for his rational knowledge of the divine unity a decision to trust in that unity. We do not mean by "decision" merely what modern positivism calls "convention," an agreement on the methodological assumptions of a given science; we mean an existential choice which is continually renewed and reaffirmed in the dynamic interplay between the "I" and the world, which serves as the basis of that interplay and of the moral attitude of the individual.

We can understand Spinoza's meaning better if we interpret his definitions and axioms not as final statements of knowledge, but as *hypotheses,* as the freely sketched foundations for a whole edifice of knowledge which is rational only in itself.

By openly recognizing the hypothetical character of the axioms, we in a sense eliminate it. This is to alter the Spinozist system in its essence. But the liberty is justified by the insight it provides into the *meaning* of the system, into the existential situation out of which Spinoza's philosophy arose and of which it is an expression. We identify the direction by the goal; the static concept of substance reveals the dynamic movement which led to it, and so we arrive at a belief in the unity of God, a faith in the meaningfulness of the world-process.

In Spinoza's magnificent attempt to validate this faith through knowledge there lies a further faith—the faith in reason, the belief that the tools of the human mind can penetrate the world-process. Spinoza, of course, unhesitatingly traveled this road to its end, and found there his doctrine of the "third knowledge," the direct, completely adequate, rational knowledge of God, or infinite substance. Here, again, philosophy could not follow him. But his unwavering conviction that rational knowledge was possible, his courageous effort to achieve it, to achieve a closer, more intimate relation with the universe through the operations of the mind, and above all, his existential faith in the meaning of the world, moved men and led them on, warmed them, calmed and heartened them.

As we have seen, Spinoza overcame passion through knowledge. He eliminated becoming; for everything that seems to "become" is in reality only a necessary "expression" of infinite being. What is the ethical significance of this radicalism of being? It lies in the tendency to conceive individual experience (*what befalls me*) as part of a great unity; every human joy and sorrow takes its place as an element in the unity of all phenomena. Ultimately this is the ethical meaning of the will to know: to subordinate the individual to the whole. Such an attitude toward *what befalls me personally* is bound to foster detachment from desires and passions and suffering. What befalls me from moment to moment no longer fills my whole horizon, no longer presents itself to me as a lone figure, but carries with it implications of the comprehensive oneness in which it resides. What before seemed meaningless acquires significance. Fear loses its terror, enemies their power to hurt, despair its sting. And if we have faith in the great unity, it becomes unnecessary to perceive it in everything around us; the ever renewed attempt to look beyond the individual suffices. Then a man grows calm, peaceful, friendly, charitable, happy; he gains distance from things and above all from himself; he sees himself as a part of the unity which he loves more and more deeply as he grasps it more and more fully.

The existential basis of Spinoza's metaphysics and ethics, then, is his belief in the unity of the infinite world-process, or, in religious terms, his belief in the unity of God. There can be no question that this is

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the fundamental principle of the Jewish religion, the great revelation which the Jews brought to the peoples of the world. Spinoza pushed the idea of the unity of God to its furthest reaches, and on it he erected one of the mightiest intellectual structures the world has ever seen.

There is, however—as we have learned from Rosenzweig, Cohen, and Buber—another principle of Jewish religious thought which Spinoza completely ignored: the "approachability" of God. It has been said, indeed, that Spinoza only listened to the second part of the "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God"; he failed to hear the "Hear, O Israel." (Without pursuing the matter, it might be pointed out that this one-sidedness is also a defect of his ethic.) Did he, therefore, betray Judaism? Did he, through his one-sided emphasis, disturb the development of the Jewish religion? Did he lead it finally into false paths? This does not seem to us to be the case; it was precisely the overemphasis on unity, the utter surrender to the "pan" in his theism, that first made the existential lack in his thought discernible. It is no accident that Buber, Rosenzweig, and Cohen achieved their sharpest formulation of the "encounter" with God in their struggle to come to terms with Spinoza. His one-sidedness was salutary; it led, on the one hand, to a deepening of the concept of unity, and, on the other, to a new grasp of the notion of "encounter." Therefore we can say that Spinoza marks a decisive stage in the unfolding of the Jewish vision of God—of mankind's vision of God.

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CALIFORNIA—THE AMERICA TO COME

The Vitality of the Provinces

H. STUART HUGHES

I HAVE now lived four years in California. Obviously I cannot regard myself as a native, but the time has long since passed when I felt any real sense of strangeness and isolation. Now may be the moment to assess what this new life has meant, to try to give those who have never attempted to live there a sense of its anxieties and rewards. Nearly all the literature on California is the work of extremists, whose sharp division of opinion reflects the contradictions that even the casual visitor cannot fail to observe. Yet unless one is to forswear entirely the function of intellectual judgment, one must try to find some common ground on which the hymns of praise to this sun-drenched state and the savage attacks of its detractors may both be lodged a little closer to reality.

I came to California with no strong desire to move West, with few preconceived ideas (and those mostly inaccurate), with almost no previous experience of the place—lured by nothing more romantic than a good job. I had visited the state briefly before the war—but in California a decade is sufficient to make nearly all one's information obsolete. Indeed, the Second World War forms the third of the great dividing points in California's history—each separated by roughly a century—the first two, of course, being the arrival of the Spanish and the discovery of gold. The war started (or, to put it more accurately, vastly accelerated) the growth of population and industrialization that are the dominant features of California society today. And it did something of even greater psychological importance: it integrated California with the rest of the nation.

The West Coast provided the base from which the Pacific War was fought, from which millions of servicemen poured out to their scattered battle posts and then flowed home again. They came back with their geographical perspective permanently altered. No longer did California appear simply as a kind of isolated outpost. It had been in the very center of the war effort—indeed, it had been the only part of the country that for a brief moment had felt itself directly threatened. (And the reaction to that threat in the form of interning the Japanese-Americans is something of which every Californian to whom I have broached the subject is now heartily ashamed.) It would be hard to estimate how much of the state's postwar growth in population is ascribable to the settlement of veterans who first were drawn to this new land during their period of war service: certainly one encounters many of them. These newer inhabitants have not cut their ties with their original homes to the extent that was the case a generation ago. A great many of them regard their residence in California as only semi-permanent. To cross the continent no longer represents the cruel rupture of pre-aviation days.

This foreshortening of psychological distance explains a great deal about California's new position in the nation. Even those West Coast citizens who never set foot in a plane feel less "cut off" when they know that the major centers of the East are only a few hours away. The intellectuals no longer regard a move to California as a perilously

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H. STUART HUGHES, who finds that California heralds the America of the future, heads the department of history at Stanford University; he is the author of *Oswald Spengler* (1952), *The United States and Italy* (1953), and other books. Mr. Hughes last appeared in COMMENTARY with a discussion of "Western Strategy and Economic Revolution" (February).

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attractive exile. Politically, it is something more than the sudden jump from fifth to second place in population that has put the state of California squarely in the center of the national picture. It is rather that Californian political leaders are now normally accepted as national figures rather than as picturesque provincials. (One may note that the outstanding Californian of the pre-war era, Herbert Hoover, spent nearly all his years of public service outside the state and now resides regularly in New York.) In fact, the more traditionalist Californians have not yet caught up with their state's altered position on the national scene. To many it comes as a surprise to discover that the three most prominent Republicans after the President—the only three who were ever seriously talked of as alternative presidential candidates—are all Californians, and that the California Democratic primary is universally considered the most important in the nation.

YET the provincial attitude dies hard. The new arrival in California finds himself puzzled by the anxious, tentative fashion in which he is asked how he likes it—long before he has any basis for judgment. In other parts of the country people simply say that they live there—and if the new arrival does not like it, so much the worse for him. In California a more positive reaction seems to be called for. A mixture of diffidence and truculence has carried over from the old days of geographical isolation. In confronting the East, a sense of an indefinable cultural inferiority wars with a proud consciousness of all that California can add to one's physical and psychological well-being. Hence the tendency to assert differences, to stress the uniqueness of California living. The new arrival is tempted to remonstrate gently, to try to explain that these differences (both favorable and unfavorable) are far less marked than they used to be—or than the Californians still imagine them to be—and that it would be better for all concerned simply to relax and to accept the phenomenon of California less emotionally, as a part of the country blessed by nature beyond all others but still embarrassingly deficient in some of the basic equipment of a modern urban society.

At the same time this eagerness to clasp the new arrival to California's breast has its infinitely pleasant aspects. Here no one can feel himself a stranger very long. Like the new shops that have only to wait for a new population to provide a new clientele, a new Californian has only to wait a few months for a noticeable proportion of his neighbors to be newer than he is. For as the mass migration from the East continues unabated, the population already present is constantly on the move. Californians, like other people, move for a variety of reasons—the rising incomes and the push toward ever farther suburbs are the same as elsewhere—but they seem to do it more often. Political party workers, driven frantic by the effort to keep up with their constituents, estimate that in certain suburban areas 50 per cent of the names on precinct lists need to be revised for every biennial election—representing an annual change of one-quarter the population. As this process continues, regional and national origins become blurred beyond recognition. In the parts of California I know, there is no discernible local accent. All forms of American and European speech are jumbled together in an easy tolerance. At the political and civic meetings I have attended, even the most bizarre of accents has never evoked an unfavorable reaction.

In fact, a tolerance of differences is one of the most attractive features of what I have earlier called the "phenomenon of California." Virtually every oddity of behavior is permitted—provided it does not disturb the neighbors. For—contrary to what most Easterners think—the Californian has a strong sense of privacy. He puts a high, solid fence around his garden and uses it as an outdoor sitting room. Door-to-door solicitors seem to be fewer and less troublesome than in the East. In California the frontier independence of the Westerner of tradition has combined with the individual peculiarities of the newer arrivals to produce a near-anarchy in community and political relations. The real

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estate promoters operate with 19th-century ruthlessness: they put jerry-built houses on inadequate lots, they chop down the centuries-old oaks that gave grace to a semi-arid landscape, they slice off the tops of hills with no regard for slides and torrential rains; it is a rare California community that has worked out and stuck to a plan for urban expansion. Parks are few; highway construction lags far behind what has been accomplished in the last decade in the Northeastern states; the schools are magnificent to look at—but there are not enough of them, nor enough adequately trained teachers, and all too many must operate on a double shift. The newcomer has trouble understanding why things must be this way—why Californians seem to prefer a mass slaughter on the highways to a regularly enforced speed limit, why they stubbornly refuse to sanction tolls for road construction, why every new school bond issue turns into a major civic battle, why smog control is a subject for endless political chatter that practically never results in action.

And yet, and yet—already I can see that I am becoming unfair. In California, as elsewhere in the world, the virtues of the inhabitants and their weaknesses are inextricably intertwined. The sweetness of life, the unobtrusive friendliness, the relative absence of tension—all these have as their lamentable double a lack of statewide civic vision. Californians talk with pride about the greatness of their state and its limitless future. But even this pride is proving inadequate to embrace the mighty changes of the postwar years and the still greater changes to come. The water-planners now estimate that within a generation or two California's population may leap to 40 million—that in population as well as in area the state will be nearly as large as a major European country like France. A time may come when one American in six will be a Californian. Before these overwhelming vistas, even the most self-confident Westerner finds himself breathless and unsure. And the semi-Californian like myself can only wonder if his state will ever find political leaders who will really measure up to the greatness of their task.

Two years ago Richard Graves, the Democratic candidate for the governorship, waged a pathetic, hopeless campaign of civic enlightenment. Everything was against him—the press, the business community, even the top leadership of organized labor. To the general public his name was scarcely known, and his personality failed to carry over in the rare television programs that his campaign managers could afford. In the end he was reduced to giving lectures to small audiences on the Californian facts of life. He told them what most of the state's inhabitants—myself included—had not stopped to think of before: that we must begin to pay for all the good things of life that California was showering upon us. We must consent to greatly increased taxes if we were ever to construct the public services in which we were so dangerously deficient. In older countries or in the Eastern states this sort of equipment had been gradually built up over many generations; in California one generation must necessarily bear a disproportionate cost. We could not go on forever irresponsibly treating our state as one vast health resort. The thought was sobering—and the election returns showed how few voters had listened and understood.

Last November I visited the Free University of Berlin, an institution with which my own university is affiliated. Here, one-third of the way round the world from my California home, as I found myself standing within a few miles of the great cultural divide, I was struck by the appropriateness of this inter-university tie. Berlin regards itself as an outpost to the East. California has lost this sense—and rightly so—in its relations with the rest of the United States. But in its relationship to the Western world as a whole, California is still a frontier. (And Californians need to be reminded at frequent intervals that they are "Westerners" in a second and more important sense of the word.) For purposes of commerce and war California faces on the Pacific. Yet culturally its links

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inevitably run back across the American continent and across the Atlantic.

These links no longer suggest a position of provincial dependence. In fact, they may suggest just the contrary. They may mean that California has become some sort of ultimate point in the development of our culture—the model of the future, the most "modern" area in which a standard of living that has risen to unprecedented heights already gives intimations of a classless society. Those who have moved to California can rest in the assurance that they need roam no farther. They have reached the point of extreme advance, both geographically and socially: only the ocean and the huge riddle of Asia lie beyond. The virtues of California and its faults are those of 20th-century society in their most sharply delineated form. Geographically, the Californian has nowhere farther to go: but politically and culturally he will have to engage all his energies to keep up with the dynamic processes that have caught him so casually unaware.

POLITICALLY, as in so much else, California is really two states. As one accustomed to the north-south split that plays so large a part in the national psychology of such European peoples as the French and Italians, I have been amused to find similar attitudes faithfully reappearing on the Pacific Coast. The northern Californians—of whom I have become one—like northerners the world over, profess a sovereign scorn for those to the south of them, ascribing to them the classic vices of slovenliness, political immaturity, and cultural unawareness. In most parts of the world, it is the northerners that dominate, and the same was true of California until the Second World War. But as Los Angeles and its surroundings began to grow to their present appalling dimensions, the population balance decisively shifted in favor of the south. Today whatever is left of the traditional preeminence of northern California rests on such intangibles as the conviction (ruefully concurred in by many southerners) that the San Francisco Bay area still gives the lead in the arts of civilization, and the almost magical prestige of the Bay city itself, whose legend has been nourished by generations of travelers and whose buoyant attractions even the most skeptical observers seem unable to resist.

California's political parties have realistically adjusted to this situation of fact by establishing the precedent of alternating senatorial candidates and state chairmen between north and south. As a rough-and-ready way of handling a delicate situation, the device works reasonably well. Yet on many occasions in both parties northerners and southerners organize and caucus separately. In general, the political extremes have been more at home in the south than in the north. In the 30's and 40's, Los Angeles was the center of left-wing fellow-traveling, and more recently it has become strongly affected by nativism and anti-intellectualism within the Republican party.

To those familiar with California politics it may seem more than accidental that Senator Knowland is a northerner and that Vice-President Nixon is from the south. Their similarities and differences suggest something of the current range of California Republicanism. The Warren tradition appears to have died with the present Chief Justice's elevation to the bench. At least I have found little trace of it—except perhaps in the persistent practice of registered Democrats voting Republican. As of today, California Republicanism is overwhelmingly conservative and nationalist. No more than shadings of meaning within commonly accepted premises—plus the inevitable personal rivalries—divide Nixon from Knowland or either of these two from Governor Knight. Six months ago California Democrats were cheerfully predicting a bitter battle within the Republican presidential primary. Instead, they are now confronted with a "unity delegation" in which the state's embarrassingly numerous Republican aspirants succeeded in merging their differences even before President Eisenhower announced his candidacy.

If the California Republican party is a smoothly running machine, virtually monopolizing the media of mass communication

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and oiled with plenty of money, the Democrats find themselves oppressed by factional fights, poverty, and defeatism. The party has been out of power for so long that it has no tangible rewards to offer. In lean years it has been almost completely dependent on the money and devotion of a few key individuals and families. Yet the reserves of amateur enthusiasm on which it can draw are greater than those available to the Republicans. A new vigor has been injected into the Democrats since the 1952 election.

UNDER the stimulus of the November defeat, a large number of the unofficial Stevenson-Sparkman clubs that had played a major role in the presidential campaign reconstituted themselves as local Democratic organizations. Walking into a political void, the clubs began to provide the city and precinct structure that up to then had been almost completely lacking. And the regular Democratic organization had the good sense to welcome rather than to oppose this unexpected reinforcement: the club movement received official sanction as a supplementary organization paralleling the regular county committees. Since their first convention at Fresno in February of 1954, the local clubs have become the driving force within the California Democratic party. And some of the amateurs of three years ago have attained semi-professional status as members of county committees or statewide party officials.

Initially, the clubs' expectations were too high. They were unduly jubilant over the fact that in June of 1954 the Democrats for the first time in recent history carried all their own primaries against the Republicans —an achievement that must certainly appear modest to those who have never experienced the miseries of cross-filing. In November the party won neither the governorship nor the United States senatorial seat—and the inevitable discouragement followed. Since then the clubs have regained much of their earlier confidence. Yet as they gird themselves for a re-run of the battle of 1952, their more experienced leaders are acutely aware of the difficulties confronting them.

Chief among these is their tenuous relation to the electorate. The membership of the California Democratic clubs is based on political interest and willingness to work: it is by no means a faithful image of the wider constituency. It has an over-representation of intellectuals and a shortage of union members. In a few areas it presents something of the character of an exclusive club—rather more so than the Republicans. I have heard of Democratic precinct workers greeted with suspicion in poorer urban areas because "they did not look like Democrats."

Obviously, the active work of politics must everywhere be the affair of a small minority. But in the case of the California Democratic party the normal cleavage between the party militants and the passive voters has widened to a major chasm. The former are unusually alert and well-educated—the latter inordinately apathetic. The California electorate as a whole is politically untrained, ill-informed, subject to sudden gusts of emotion from the right or the left, and unimaginatively inclined to vote for the incumbent whoever he may be. In this highly fluid population, the normal bonds of political loyalty have weakened to the vanishing point; thousands of potential voters have not even learned how to get themselves on the electoral rolls. Under these conditions it is not surprising that the Democratic leadership and club members—although overwhelmingly for Stevenson—are far from confident that Kefauver will not once again sweep the party primary.

Moreover, the Democrats suffer from a lack of qualified candidates. There are many young couples who are willing, even eager, to make speeches and ring doorbells. But there are few indeed of California's new Democratic party workers who are in a position to run for office: they are tied down by their jobs, their small children, their lack of financial backing. Hence all too frequently nominations go by default to the mediocre or those with private sources of funds. But even this dreary aspect of California politics has its encouraging side. It suggests that a political career lies wide open to the ambitious or

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the dedicated. Here there is no necessity of gradually working toward electoral office through years of party drudgery. In California almost anyone can be a candidate. On my arrival in the state in 1952 I had scarcely unpacked my bags before I was called on to make a political speech, and I had been a resident for less than a year when somebody suggested I run for office. Once more, California's magnanimity toward the stranger proved overwhelming.

UNDER the blessing of the ever present sun, how fares the life of the mind? Superficially things do not appear very favorable. The population at large is blissfully unconscious of intellectual concerns, and the students we professors encounter in our classrooms have with rare exceptions been inadequately prepared and have developed slovenly mental habits in their local high schools. The newspapers are almost uniformly awful. The billboards and roadstands on the highways are more than customarily offensive. It is no wonder that so many people only casually acquainted with the state have dismissed it as a cultural desert.

Learning to live in California is largely a question of being rigorously selective. In the bewildering variety of attractions and things repellent that the state offers, one needs to develop a sense for what one really wants and what one wishes to discard. In California all types of life are possible. As opposed to more established areas of the country, where one tends to fall into a ready-prepared pattern, in California one can and must build one's own life. Hence the pride and confidence that are noticeable in so many Californians by adoption. They have confronted the strangeness of the West and they have conquered it: out of bits and pieces of the new and the old they have constructed their lives on a pattern that is all of their own devising. And they are not ashamed to admit that in this construction the more obvious aspects of California living—the sun, the outdoors, the garden so immaculately trimmed and faithfully watered—have made their contribution to a wider sense of well-being.

All this is true of intellectuals as well as of their neighbors. Once the newly arrived writer or professor gets over his initial sense of distance and loneliness—and provided he keeps an open mind—he can begin to see positive advantages in the California situation. His neighbors may be *un*-intellectual; but they are usually not *anti*-intellectual. They may find his way of life peculiar; but they are quite prepared to let him lead it as he wishes. As one accustomed to the town-and-gown hostilities of New England university cities—based on the bitterest cleavages of religion, national origin, and social status—I have been delighted to encounter none of this sort of thing on the West Coast. When I have occasion to identify myself as a professor, I never sense any hostility in the response. It is usually one of warm approbation mixed with curiosity.

In some senses an un-intellectual community is more favorable to the life of the mind than a semi-intellectual one. It is perhaps better for the writer or professor to be left strictly alone than to be fussed over by the wrong sort of people. In the East the great menace to the intellectual's integrity comes from the petty corruptions of middlebrow culture. In the West, where the semi-cultured are so much less numerous, the intellectual is not obliged to spend time and energy in fighting off their advances. Where the life of the mind is the affair of comparatively few and is surrounded with practically no publicity, there is little incentive to become the sort of intellectual hanger-on, the purveyor of literary chit-chat, that is so common in New York or Cambridge. There may be a Californian Bohemia, but I have not yet located it. I have never been invited to a literary cocktail party. California intellectuals lead quiet, family lives, outwardly indistinguishable from those of their neighbors. The main things that mark them off are the absence of television antennas on their roofs and their unconventional working hours.

A generation or two ago, the California writer suffered from a real sense of isolation. And it is still true today that those fare best who know exactly what they want to do and

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are not dependent on the stimulus of café-type conversation. In California the life of the mind is a very serious—perhaps a too serious—affair. The young Californian knows this. And if he succeeds in fighting his way through to intellectual eminence, he has the confidence that comes from having essentially done the job himself. His parents and his school have given him little help. Even at college he has had to struggle against the slackness of the majority. We university professors know at first hand the intellectual drag that this majority offers. But the gifted and interested minority are a delight to teach. They may come to us ill-prepared in the sense of formal knowledge—yet even this deficiency has its merits. Among the best California students there is little superficial brightness and sophistication: there is rather a great freshness and plasticity of mind.

At this point one may well ask, is it healthy for intellectuals to live a life so much apart? Is it good for them—or for the community—to work so isolated from the rest of the population? I confess that the question has frequently troubled me and that I have no adequate answer for it. An additional reflection or two will have to suffice. In the first place I have necessarily exaggerated the rigidity of the separation. In one sense it is intensified by the peculiarities of California politics—by the current alignment that puts nearly all the intellectuals in the Democratic camp and the vast majority of the leading citizens of the community among the Republicans. But in another sense this same political cleavage encourages a feeling of wider participation among California intellectuals. I have already suggested that many of them take an active part in the work of the Democratic clubs. And they do this unostentatiously, without the pretension to leap immediately to national importance that has frequently vitiated the political activity of intellectuals in other parts of the country. In modest political tasks California writers and professors can meet a minority of neighbors on a basis of shared interests and values.

It is also true that the intellectual can occasionally find understanding and a warm welcome among some of the leading citizens of the community: in San Francisco, for example, the old-established Jewish families maintain a highly respected tradition of concern for culture and patronage of the arts. In California, as elsewhere, gifted minorities seek each other out. This second reflection leads into a wider question. In the comparative isolation of the intellectual, as in so much else, may not California simply be offering the model of the future? If, as some of us suspect, intellectual originality in this country is becoming an increasingly rare commodity—if the older cultural centers are sinking into sterility—then a sense of isolation may be a positive advantage, perhaps even an essential to creativity. It has happened before in history that stagnation in the capitals has driven the more imaginative out to the provinces. And from the provinces has come the fresh surge of creativity that has started a new cultural epoch. This same process may well be going on in our country today. And if life in the provinces is indeed best, why not select the pleasantest province of all, where one need not battle the climate winter and summer but can work serenely and efficiently the year round?

Yet if one were to ask my friends and me the final question—do you plan to end your days in California?—we should be puzzled for an answer. We have few apparent complaints. Yet we cannot help distrusting our contentment. Puritans despite ourselves, we set ourselves anxious and perhaps unnecessary questions. Are we falling behind intellectually? De we lack the stimulus that comes from competition and conversational excitement? How will our children feel about the pressures toward conformity that leave us adults nearly untouched? In the end probably half of us will return East, drawn back by earlier associations and professional opportunities. But we shall leave with profound regret, and we know that our dreams will be tormented by memories of our vanished paradise.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

"PAPA"

A Portrait

DAVID BOROFF

WHEN you come down to it, there was a consistent pattern in Papa's life. It was a kind of rugged, stubborn independence, a lonely intransigence. An embattled little man, he would be beholden to no one; he would be taken in by no one. This was at once his strength and his weakness. It was what kept him from being a success in the new land. He wouldn't even let the process of adjusting to the new country whittle down his freedom and independence. To the very end he had a deep distrust of the elaborate techniques of living in America. He marshaled all of his considerable intelligence to hold the new at arm's length. He was always a child about business, some deep instinct warning him that it was corrupt and enslaving. A baker, he had a strong pride in his status as a workingman—he used just that term with its suggestion of dignity and flavor of the Knights of Labor—but he was suspicious of trade union bureaucrats. The nicest thing he could say about someone was that he was an "honest workman," and he saw the honest workingman beleaguered by a host of crooked politicians and untrustworthy trade union officials.

He was stunned into an inarticulate respect for FDR, and I remember his going to vote for him, uneasy in a new suit. But he was contemptuous of politicians in general. He held Hoover personally responsible for the depression, and there were many winter evenings when, as if to reassure us, he would take out his bankbooks and we would go through the mummery—for we had done it so many times before—of adding up the grand totals. I remember it clearly, for it came to a little more than $6,000. That seemed like a strong fortress amid the depression. One of the jokes of our childhood was his rendition of the name of the city's official greeter—"Grubber" Whalen he called him as if through some divine ordering the man had the first name he deserved.

You looked at him and saw a small, mild-looking man, not much over five feet tall. In his forties, he was beginning to go soft around the middle, but his body was otherwise compact and well knit. He had a worker's arms—strong forearms, thick wrists, and bulging veins on large, clearly defined biceps. As a child, I always felt cheated by the fact that his biceps somehow had already gone soft: here were the muscles, and yet the power seemed to have evacuated them. A curious mixture of vanity and unconcern, he dressed indifferently or worse—old shirts with their sleeves cut off served him as undershirts—but always carried a small pocket mirror among the carefully organized junkheap in his pockets.

A small, mild-looking man. But what a torrent of rage was in him! About many

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THIS portrait of an immigrant Jewish father is the second character sketch from the pen of DAVID BOROFF. The first, "Garment Center Success," appeared in October 1955. Born in Brooklyn, Mr. Boroff studied at Brooklyn College (where he now teaches English) and at Columbia University. For a time he was a psychiatric case worker with adolescent offenders in a reformatory. Mr. Boroff has contributed to the *Reconstructionist* and *Congress Weekly*, as well as to *College English*.

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things: the barbaric behavior of motorists . . . the failures of his children . . . the stupid selfishness of politicians . . . the arrogance of bosses . . . the waste of coal through the excessive heating of our two-family house. And he would mutter curses softly and tenderly under his breath, and his feet would tap in a steady wrathful tattoo. The image of life he had was of a world of knaves and fools with only himself to stem the tides of rascality.

But there was also a furtive, self-effacing kindness in him. About many things: about his family most of all (he had six sons and two daughters); there was no sacrifice he would not make. This lonely man, for whom money was the ultimate protection, would silently give what was requested—for a business investment, for a trip, for anything. You only had to ask. And there was the money he sent to Europe in response to the routinely lugubrious letters from his relatives. (He finally sent them tickets for the trip here; they declined to come. Twelve years later they were marched to the crematoria by Hitler.) For the abandoned and the vulnerable he had a shamefaced tenderness. Once he brought home an old homeless German tailor—his name was simply and desolately Willie—with the quixotic idea that he would live in the cellar and serve as a kind of handy man. Cornered by poverty as we were —or thought we were, and it comes to the same thing—we saw this as a wonderful adventure. But it didn't work out. Willie soon left. Then there were the mouth-watering meals Papa provided for our boarder, Robert Rose. He would come home early in the morning with a huge bagful, almost higher than his head, of bread and cake, the warm smells of soft rolls, of jelly doughnuts, of brown-crusted rye bread filling the kitchen. Then he would see Bob Rose shivering in the morning cold (he was a thin-skinned Anglo-Saxon, always complaining about the lack of heat: we found that funny). Shyly, Papa would ask him into the kitchen, where they would share a breakfast of warm rolls smeared with butter and cups of steaming coffee which my father prepared.

Our house tumbled with children and vitality, but we were a little ashamed of being so many in the face of the smaller families on the block, which somehow seemed more "American." We looked with silent envy at the smug, tidy little families of two or three children, each one with his own room. All our names proved too much for Papa; when he called one of us he would rehearse the whole list and then pounce triumphantly on the name he wanted. As his hair grayed, he took to calling me, as the youngest, *ben z'kunim* (child of his old age), with a strange mixture of patriarchal pride and shyness. Actually, he was only thirty-eight at the time I was born, but that was a different world, and there was a different yardstick for measuring age.

He had a talent for simplicity. His was the timeless cycle of living—family, and work, and rest. These were the things he believed in. He was constantly inciting us to rest. "In bed is *Gan Eden*," he once said to George, which was about as close as he ever came to expressing a philosophy. George, nineteen years of age and Broadway-smart, said, "Yes, *aber nit allein*." My father turned away, scowling. (He was always very shy about sex.) He never abandoned a kind of peasant feeling that all time was one. An inveterate reader of Yiddish newspapers, he would fall behind, and the pile of unread papers would mount. However, he would not be hurried; there was no need to rush to catch up with the day's calamities and follies. "Pa," we would say tauntingly, "when are you going to read about World War I? Have they declared war yet?"

He hated businessmen, but he wanted his sons to become businessmen. He was agnostic, but he sent his children to Hebrew school and waved the "*lukshen* strap" menacingly if their report cards were poor. He had little sympathy with abstract ideas—his own bent was pragmatic—but he took pride in the higher education of his children.

In his forties, he began to attend the local evening school for foreigners. We roared triumphantly, getting our own back, at his comic mutilations of language, his thickly clotted malapropisms. The final irony came when he took his class photograph. There he stood against the solemn wardrobe doors, the specimens of Palmer writing and prize-winning compositions overhead; and beetling down over this determined little escapee from the ghetto was a classmate, a huge Slav at least a foot taller, looking for all the world like a fierce and unappeasable Cossack.

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Intensely shy, he had no friends, and it was even an effort for him to socialize when his brother visited—"rich Uncle Jake" from the Bronx, who owned a car way back in the 20's. He would fuss nervously in the bedroom, which he shared with us, and finally come into the living room, hardly daring to look fully at his brother. Later in life—we were told by his second wife—he joined the teeming discussion groups on the boardwalk at Coney Island. It was hard to imagine. We could see him only standing at the edge of some group, holding his Yiddish newspaper like a shield, listening with skeptical interest.

About one thing he was adamant: he didn't want us to become bakers; and he was uneasy when we were around a bakery, fearful that through some alchemy of the blood we would be drawn back to the craft. As indeed we were. There were those fabled times when late at night we would deliver his meal—half a chicken and a pitcher of coffee—to where he was working, Spinrod's or the place on 12th Avenue. We would walk through the empty summer streets, with just the soughing of the wind in the trees and the occasional car whooshing past—just Sammy and I bearing our burdens with dignity. Then we would go into the bakery through the back door and see our little father looking alien amid the flour bags and the huge-jawed ovens. He would be wearing a paper hat to keep the flour dust off his hair, and a white apron, and his arms would be coated with flour. The men would talk with the easy jocularity of workers. My father would take the food from us and shoo us out quickly. He seemed uneasy with us around. Once, only once, he let us stay briefly. It was Spinrod's, and the owner knew our family. He took us to a huge, pulpy mound of dough, and deftly chunked out a piece of it and kneaded it in a flash into a roll. We stood open-mouthed. Then he took us to another mountain of dough, and shaped a bread with quiet efficiency. Soon he sent us home.

Jewish parents protected and protected their children. And it can only be because they themselves felt fenced in by terror, a terror they couldn't control—the terror of the steerage, the terror of the streets, the terror of tonguelessness in a foreign country and, always and forever, the terror of poverty. The protectiveness took curious and stubborn forms. Only Papa had money; only Papa had strength; only Papa knew the way back from Delancey Street to Borough Park. The boys grew up. They were big, five feet ten inches, with shoulders pulled wide. There was furniture to be moved, a bed . . . a table. "Don't touch," he would shout, the curses streaming softly and tenderly. And he would seize the heavy bed spring or shove the resistant couch, while the young men stood, their arms hanging uselessly. Haunting him was the fear that one of them would get a hernia. He knew all about hernias. He himself was severely ruptured, and I can remember the huge, sweat-stained truss that he normally kept hidden in his room, but which sometimes hung, ungainly and monstrous, from the iron bedstead. It touched off half-buried memories of the hospital supply store in the neighborhood full of crutches and wheelchairs, which we passed as children with a guilty and protective sense of our own young wholeness.

How cut off this lonely man was! Even from his sons: for there was none of the self-conscious sharing of interests one finds between father and son today. He didn't even sign my report card; one of my older brothers, better versed in educational matters, did that. At one time he gave us our haircuts, but we rebelled against that. He did, however, have one inalienable function. When Passover came, he took the four youngest boys to the East Side for suits. We would go to a dark, noisome clothing store on the very eve of the holiday and try on suits. Invariably, we would end up with similar weaves and patterns. Then the bargaining would begin. And here quiet little Papa would rise to unexpected heights of anguished eloquence. The four boys would stand around, well-trained but helpless actors in a drama whose outcome was clearly established. Papa would stage-manage us with a flick of his wrist, and out we would march suitless, the hassle over price still unresolved. The storekeeper overtook us before we had covered half a block. (Like Lot and his family we were enjoined against looking back.) He descended on us saying what a crime it was to give the suits away for nothing, but: "It's a *shandeh* for such nice *boyus* not to have new suits, and it's already *erev Pesach*." And so we would get new suits, each one at

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least two sizes too large against future growth.

This was a timid but brave man. Once on the subway, in the drugged weariness of four in the morning, on his way back from a night's work, he was approached by two thugs who demanded his money. He reached into his pocket, pulled out a single-edged razor blade he kept cradled in paper, and jumped at them with a curse. They backed away and then, scared by his determined short-legged pursuit, bolted to the back of the car and out the doors at the station. (They had timed it so that they could escape as soon as they had robbed their victim.) He told the story soberly and with quiet pleasure that morning in the cheerful warmth of a winter kitchen. (But there was also the morning he told us of the pretty dark-haired girl in his bakery—on Avenue X—who had three of her fingers sheared off by the bread-slicing machine.)

At home he ministered gravely to the needs of the house, washing the dishes, keeping the furnace going (though never warmly enough), forever going through the closets. But when he got out on the streets, he gathered himself into a tight fist of protest. Against everything: the fearful pace, the homicidal drivers, the thundering subways. Crossing the street became an act of daily insurrection. He would wait for no car. They had brakes; let them stop. Every day was pedestrian's day. Drivers would bellow at him, "Whatsa matter? Wanna get killed?" and Papa would hurl back a choice Yiddish curse, the voice starting low, then building up, violently, and trailing off into choked and inarticulate insult. Once a young driver made the casual, meaningless threat of the traffic dispute. Papa rushed at the car, and only two of my brothers kept him from dragging the astonished young man from his seat.

The knowledge that my father was short was something that I stoutly resisted. He couldn't be—that's all. He was big and strong—he had to be. There was the legend that he had been in the Czarist army and had fought in the Russo-Japanese War. "How many men did you kill each day?" I asked him once as a child, as we sat on the bench in front of the house. "Nine," he said blandly. And I had an image of him on that remote battlefield dutifully destroying his quota of Japanese each day with that same quietly busy air he had about the house. "Were you ever wounded?" I pressed further. He turned up one broad, work-coarsened thumb. He pointed to the deep line separating it from the rest of his hand. With the faintest play of a smile, he told me that the thumb had almost been sliced off by a Japanese bayonet. "But you killed him," I insisted, convinced that death was too small a price for the Japanese soldier to pay for his offense. My father dutifully assented.

The truth was that he had fled Russia to escape military service. There was the story of the graft-procured papers and of the false name taken one stormy night from an unoffending tombstone in the local cemetery. When I heard this account, it pleased me. It was during the period, back in the depression, of the "peace strikes" and the militant student movement.

As the years advanced I could no longer hold back the knowledge of my father's littleness. I would measure myself against him and then against my schoolmates with a sense of dismay. He was no taller than a twelve-year-old boy! Then more shameful awareness supervened—his fumbling, comic English; the absurd vanity of his hand mirror; the cut-down old shirts he wore for underwear; the steady, abrasive quarreling with my mother. Once in my last term in high school he had to come to school to sign some papers. As we walked through the halls, I saw lovely little Norma Smith approaching us. She was a girl for whom I had conceived a love of great purity and radiance—the kind of love you can feel only when you are sixteen. At that moment I hated my father, hated him for being there with me at that moment, hated him for being surveyed coolly and impersonally by Norma. (I had just lost her; she had become a school big shot by appearing in a varsity play.)

Some years later he spent a day with me at the reformatory school where I was working as a teacher and case worker. He had dressed carefully, and at this time of his life, with his violence abated, he was a pleasant-looking, solid, gray-haired little gentleman. We drove up on New Year's Day. He was going with me to make sure that I didn't fall asleep at the wheel, since I had been up all

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night at a party. It was a pleasant drive up, sitting snugly in the warm car, watching the gray early morning light thicken.

He stayed close to me at the reformatory, a little frightened but curious about the place. In the office, he acknowledged introductions, shyly waiting for me to rescue him from the threat of a social situation. When we went out to lunch it happened. As we crossed the yard, which was full of inmates insolently slumped on benches, one of the keepers called me. I left my father for a moment and crossed the yard. He, suddenly abandoned, felt a quick rush of fear, and came running awkwardly towards me shouting, "Davie, Davie, Davie. . . ." The inmates, quick to detect an opening, sat up, watched, and from scattered benches, there was laughter and the mimicking call of "Abie, Abie." (For some reason, that is the way they had heard it.) I took my father's arm and led him across the yard to the mess hall, full of fury at him for humiliating both of us, and at myself for having left him alone, bleakly aware that I had done so to avoid introducing him to the smugly Anglo-Saxon prison keeper. He was unsettled by the experience and remained tightly on guard during the meal.

He spent most of the afternoon in my office or in my room, resting and napping. When it was time for me to have supper, he declined to cross the yard with me. I averted my gaze. We both knew why he wasn't going. When I put him on the bus back to New York that evening, it was with mingled relief and shame. I felt that in some way I had betrayed him.

He was not really a healthy man, but he followed a careful regimen which worked well for him. A cold bath in the morning, rest in the afternoon, and a small shot of liquor once a day (from a bottle that was endlessly and hilariously diluted) were the features of his program. He had a deep and abiding distrust of physicians. At twenty-seven, he had been told by one that he had a heart condition, and warned that he had only a short life ahead of him. A few years later the doctor in question died of heart disease. Papa chuckled bitterly over it. From that time on, he retreated from all contact with the medical profession, nursing his own wounds in the sanctuary of his bedroom, examining his crippling hernia with his own cool eyes, and keeping a steady stream of curses going at the heads of doctors.

Years after the long-dead physician had predicted it, heart disease did knock him down. He lay amid the sleazy furnishings in the Coney Island apartment, the Yiddish newspapers still to be read around him, his children gathered in a somber semi-circle around the bed. "Go," he said in Yiddish. "It's late. You can come back tomorrow if you like." When they started to shuffle out of the room, he called them back. "Do you know which train to take? And a transfer . . . you can get one from the trolley on Neptune Avenue. . . ." They let him explain—he had been through this many times—and then they left.

He died the next afternoon. He fell into a coma while alone in the apartment. This was the final terror, and this, too, he faced alone.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

WISDOM FOR A TIME OF RECKONING

A Medieval Hebrew Fable

THE preponderant concern of medieval literature, Hebrew as well as Latin, is doctrinal and liturgical, and such humanistic oases as Immanuel of Rome's *Hell and Heaven,* Joseph Zabara's *Book of Delight,* or Berechyah ha-Nakdan's *Animal Fables* are as refreshing as the *Carmina Burana.* So artfully composed are these works that generations of readers have been content to accept them as mere belles-lettres; actually each reflects a measure of social criticism, and usually (as Dr. Shimeon Bernstein has pointed out) criticism of the arrogance and injustice of communal leaders. Riddling criticism is naturally easiest to cloak in animal fables, where humbler creatures are often at the mercy of ravenous lions or wily foxes; below is one of Berechyah's (No. 32 in Haberman's excellent edition), where the tables are turned.

The style requires a word of explanation. Virtually every phrase, except for simple connectives, is taken from Scripture, distorted to give meaning in a new context. The meaning, indeed, is often secondary; inevitably virtuosity in exploiting odd phrases becomes an end in itself. In translation this virtuosity is reduced to empty turgidity, while the phrases which carry the meaning are often enigmatic to the point of unintelligibility. In translating, I have done nothing to regularize the style, but on the contrary have retained conventional Biblical phraseology wherever possible to illustrate the author's technique.—MOSES HADAS.

Wisdom meet for a time of reckoning is better than any choice vessel.

A COCK said to his hen: "There is no more wheat or ears; wherefore are we laggard? There is famine in the city and we shall die. Let us go and lodge in the villages. My brother hath a granary of barley, and there shall we dwell for a whole year, about the granary and its plenty." The two went forth together and walked a day's journey until they came to the town in a land of wheat and barley. There the hen built her nest, and before the year's end there were chicks in her form and image, seven robust cockerels and a puny pullet. When she clucked to her brood they scratched for grain with their feet as did she. They ate share and share alike; there was abundance, and the mother rejoiced in her progeny. When the time of harvest came they spoke of returning to the place of their own dwelling, and the cock said: "Give ear. We shall not return to our folk empty-handed lest we be for a mockery in their eyes, as if we had come from a place of famine. Rejoice and be glad at my saying. Look upon me and do ye likewise. Each one, cock, chick, and hen, shall carry an ear in his mouth, until ye come to the land of wheat; and ye shall bring forth the old before the new." Said the hen: "Thy counsel is good and sound. Give a portion unto seven, yea unto eight, and each shall carry an ear in his mouth." The eighth was unequal to the burden, for he was sickly. This is what befell him. As they walked by the way of the wilderness, their band in confusion, a fox lay hidden in the forest's thickets and watched the band as it came on. The cock was aware that it was upon him and all his host that the fox cast his eye, and he said: "Trembling hath seized me and my heart is confounded. She that hath borne seven is waxed feeble. The apprehensions of this ambush terrify me, lest he come and smite me, mother upon children. But let us plot cunningly how we may escape, lest he be master over us as he was master over our

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fathers, for ever is he guileful towards us." As the cock was yet speaking the lurker emerged from the covert where he had lurked and approached the sickly one and said: "Whose are these and what do they carry in their mouths?" He answered: "The tails of foxes are they carrying, which they wrested from the foxes by their strength, and then flayed the skin from upon them." The fox said: "If such are their deeds why then is your mouth not laden as is theirs?" And he answered: "It is for this that thou hast come towards me, for it is *thy* tail that I await. Thou shalt no more return to thy tent; my lot I shall make fall upon thee." When the fox heard this he ran away, as the strong man runs a course.

* * *

The parable is for a man whose garments are tattered and whose words are not heard. In the assembly of the rich he is for a mockery, and his timely wisdom is despised. But at the day of reckoning the wisdom that issues from his mouth is better than any precious vessel.

THE VILLAGE OF MY FATHERS

J. A. BARRON

I WONDER what it looks like. Earlocked men with caftans,
Women with their wigs and Hannah in their eyes,
Hasidim, drunk with piety and narcotic prayer,
This village I never saw nor my father either.
Unlike New England's land except, perhaps, for climate.
Men in grim solitude and women who did all work.
How strange a land it was, one people living absent-mindedly
In the country of another, island sinking in water's hate.
One countryman they had there though, a lad and his mother
And loved they are and were as none have ever been.
From Nazareth they hail, this woman and her boy.

But they, my fathers, spat within their beards
In ache of wounded hearts, of children bruised by stones and fists
And kicks, of clubs and thrusts into the very groin of mercy
Until poor Jesus says with Heine, "No mass, no kaddish, say for me."
So this village was, two streets and the alleys off of them.
On one, a barbaric boulevard of unpainted timber where Slavic peasants
Made their beds between the pigs and Mary's smile,
Stood the church, marble white, its cross, firm and proud and gold.
Was this Christ's heart or was it Herod's face?
I did not answer but walked the other street
And saw the synagogue and David's star and a hundred thousand scars
And I smelled a fire but the others shrugged and saw no smoke.
They say the two God-houses were a mile away; I cannot say
But as far as Jerusalem is from Rome, so far it was from each to home.

I said I smelled a fire; a Jew can always spot a funeral pyre.
You see, I never saw the village of my fathers.
This is but a dreadful daydream, a photograph of anguish.
The village of my fathers is the village of the dead.
Its denizens are the brothers Auschwitz with snowflake flesh,

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Their shoulders rounded, eyes of a fish head, smelling of death about to die.
There is my fire! They were right. There is no smoke,
Only the sweet burning smell of babies being cremated.
So this is what Wodin's men have done—
The village of my fathers is the village of the dead.

Yet daylight bows to night and moon still does his watch.
The living are as living always were, furious with those
Who being killed and die, prove for all to see that all men can.
So it is, a few millions less, a few millions more—
The soil of Poland got some unexpected rain, oddly red.
Of such man-made rain what else can or need be said?
For Europe's wind has become a disciple of atonality.
Lightly the virtuoso strikes the keyboard—the screams of the gassed and the dying.
The tones he plays with, keys he reaches
Are more sounds than ever one dreamed
Born out of more horrors than ever were outside of dreams.

JEROME A. BARRON is a native of Newport, R. I., and studied at Boston University and Tufts College.

MY MOTHER'S FATHER

MARTIN HALPERN

MY MOTHER'S father, crippled and seventy,
Waited for death on the living room couch
And passed the time by reading Spinoza.

That Spring was coming he knew by the clamor
Of boys below in the street, and the bounce
Of their ball against pavement and building and headache.

Although a Jew, my mother's father
Preferred Spinoza to Talmud and Torah,
And would scoff at the sketch of a fidgety godhead

Who altered his plans with every report
That the chosen people were disappointing
His faith in their sense of propriety.

The ball bounced in through the open window,
Skipped from the sill, and before he could budge
Had bumped both glasses and book to the floor.

My mother's father, alone in the house,
Sick to his stomach and throbbing with headache,
Studied the blur of the ball in his lap.

He groped for his glasses but couldn't quite reach them,
And couldn't quite reach the Works of Spinoza
Sprawled on their back by his crippled left leg.

And so he prayed. He closed his eyes and silently
Of Yaveh, Lord of Israel and Judah, asked
For "sense enough to place this minor accident,
This random crime, *sub specie aeternitatis.*"

MARTIN HALPERN, a teaching fellow at Harvard, has published verse elsewhere, but this is his first appearance in COMMENTARY.

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ON THE HORIZON

TRUMAN AND THE IDEA OF THE COMMON MAN

Image and Self-Image

NORMAN PODHORETZ

THE Truman memoirs are devoted mainly to Truman's political career, which of course is as it should be. But the book is not strictly a political autobiography. Truman tells us a good deal about his life apart from politics—and we must remember that he was thirty-eight years old before he got involved even in local politics. Some of his more personal reminiscences are unconvincing. For example, in writing about his childhood (which he does "without any introspective trimmings") he sees himself as a less mischievous, untroubled Tom Sawyer, a carefree, rough-and-tumble American farm boy who was forever having the time of his life:

> I pulled the wagon with the two boys in it into the hole and upset it. It seemed a good thing to do, and it was repeated several times, taking turn about. When my mother found us, we were plastered with mud and dirty water from head to foot. What a grand spanking I got as the ringleader!
>
> I would sit in the judges' stand with Grandpa and watch the races, eat striped candy and peanuts, and have the best time a kid ever had.
>
> My mother and grandmother dried a lot of peaches and apples, and what fine pies they would make in the winter.
>
> My mother's older sister, Aunt Sally, was a lovely person, as were all my aunts.
>
> There were four children in [Aunt Emma's] family, and we really had a grand time when we spent the day with them.
>
> Those were wonderful days and great adventures. My father bought me a beautiful black Shetland pony and the grandest saddle to ride him with I ever saw.
>
> We had an old Negro woman who washed for us every week and sometimes cooked for us. She had three boys and two girls, and what a grand time we had.
>
> I do not remember a bad teacher in all my experience. They were all different, of course, but they were the salt of the earth. They gave us our high ideals. . . .
>
> In Independence we made a number of new acquaintances, and I became interested in one in particular. She had golden curls and has, to this day, the most beautiful blue eyes. We went to Sunday school, public school from the fifth grade through high school, graduated in the same class, and marched down life's road together. For me she still has the blue eyes and golden hair of yesteryear.

THE fact that the whole picture is a little too sweet, a little too conventional in its healthy, old-fashioned Americanness gives us no warrant to doubt its truth. On the contrary, it is very important to understand that this is how Truman has genuinely come to see his childhood. But it is also impossible not to feel that all those grand times he had must be partly the product of a rather wilful memory. At the age of eight he was fitted

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FOR this analysis of the personality of Harry Truman, NORMAN PODHORETZ draws mainly on the two volumes of the ex-President's memoirs, *Year of Decisions* (which was reviewed last February by Henry Bamford Parkes) and *Years of Trial and Hope* (Doubleday, $5.00). Mr. Podhoretz, a COMMENTARY editor, has been a frequent contributor to this and other magazines, among them *Partisan Review* and *Scrutiny*.

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with thick glasses which kept him out of games (he had to content himself with umpiring in baseball "because I couldn't see well enough to bat"); he was probably more delicate as a child than he lets on, for at ten he had difficulty in recovering from a case of diphtheria ("my legs, arms, and throat were paralyzed for some months after the diphtheria left me, but [my brother] Vivian made a rapid and complete recovery"); and he was enough of a solitary to have read "all the books in the Independence Public Library and our big old Bible three times through" by the time he was thirteen or fourteen. No wonder, then, that history and biography were his favorite reading matter and that "the lives of great men and famous women intrigued" him: "I wanted to know what caused the successes or the failures of all the famous leaders of history. . . . Reading history, to me, was far more than a romantic adventure. It was solid instruction and wise teaching which I somehow felt that I wanted and needed."

At this point Truman teeters on the edge of complete honesty and one waits for him to admit simply that he was an ambitious, perhaps lonely boy who dreamed of greatness. But no. He read history because "I felt that I ought to know the facts about the system of government under which I was living, and how it came to be. . . . [It was] a valuable part of the total education which I hoped to have some day." Not only was he ambitious, but he lived under the tyranny of a need which is crucial to an understanding of his later development as President:

> I used to watch my father and mother closely to learn what I could do to please them, just as I did with my schoolteachers and playmates. Because of my efforts to get along with my associates I usually was able to get what I wanted. It was successful on the farm, in school, in the Army, and particularly in the Senate.

But, he might have added, it was not necessary in the Presidency. Truman flowered in the Presidency, as perhaps no man except Lincoln has ever done, possibly because the office liberated him for the first time in his life from the eternal compulsion to please those around him. From the moment he fired Byrnes, there is a kind of exhilarating quality—as of a man who has suddenly lost his fear on the battlefield and become daring through the sheer joy of fearlessness—in the way Truman the President slashed about him with what often seemed highly impolitic vigor, culminating, of course, in the dismissal of MacArthur. He had only to please an abstraction now—the "people"—not those "associates" who nagged and pressed their demands on him and may have been skeptical of his abilities. And pleasing the people turned out to be a means of self-realization for him: he identified himself so completely with the people that he was unable to distinguish between his feelings, his needs, and theirs.

To please the people was to please himself, for he *was* the people, he was good old "give 'em hell" Harry Truman, the ex-haberdasher, "plain folks" in the White House. But this affectionate character he developed only gradually. By now the name of Truman has grown so resonant with intimations of the colorful and the spirited that it takes an effort of the imagination to remember what he looked like to the world at the moment of Roosevelt's death. In 1945 when people said that Truman was an ordinary little man, they said it with dismay and condescension. Of course he was "solid"—everyone remembered the Truman Committee as a courageous and honest investigating body that went after all the corrupt contractors who were growing fat on the war effort, and everyone knew that Truman (despite his uncomfortable associations with the Pendergast machine) had a fine New Dealing record in the Senate. But with the death of Roosevelt, the nation turned its eyes to the bespectacled, sharp-faced little fellow and saw prose where before there had been poetry, it listened to the stumbling, wooden delivery of his speeches where before it had heard the most mellifluous oratory in living American memory, and it mourned, like Shakespeare's Cleopatra at the death of Antony, "The odds is gone and there is nothing left remarkable beneath the visiting moon."

And indeed the truth is that at the beginning he *was* prosaic, though never "ordinary"—it is absurd how we get trapped by our own metaphors. He came into the Presidency with no big ideas or new conceptions—yet one guesses from hints dropped here and there in the memoirs that he was

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not altogether surprised to find himself President and had been preparing for it; instead, he stated his determination to continue the policies of his "great predecessor" (what else could he do, after all?). The first matters he addressed himself to were problems of detail and administration:

When there is a change in administration, there are bound to be some changes in the Cabinet, but I knew how necessary it was for me to keep an open mind on all the members of the Cabinet—until we had had an opportunity to work together. Their experience with President Roosevelt and their knowledge were necessary to me in this crisis. I intended, also, to maintain a similar attitude toward the heads of all the federal agencies. But I had some mental reservations about the heads of certain temporary war agencies.

These he records as his thoughts just a few minutes after he was sworn in, only two hours after Roosevelt died, and they suggest not merely that he had been thinking about the Presidency, but also how he intended to feel his way into his new job.

There is no question that he took over in the White House almost immediately. But he had to exercise a certain tact:

President Roosevelt's belongings were numerous in the room. Ship models and ship prints were especially obvious, and the desk was laden with mementos. Everywhere were signs of the man who had labored there so long. I had no wish to change the room as yet, but I was forced to use the desk, and so I asked an aide to put away the former President's belongings. Except for the objects on the desk, I carefully avoided disturbing the late President's possessions.

The symbolic drama in which Truman was involved vis-à-vis Roosevelt is enacted in that passage. He tells us that he had never been very close to Roosevelt, and in his eighty-eight days as Vice-President he saw him only once or twice. Now he had to move through the magic presence of Roosevelt into a job, and move he did—by clearing away the desk. He immediately had reports submitted to him by each executive department on the policies of the government, and he studied them late into the night, with the same earnest diligence that marked those boyhood days when he pored over Plutarch and Abbott, and when he made it his business in school to look up the background of "each great event in history . . . to find out who brought them about." This is the same man, too, who, before leaving for Washington after his election to the Senate, "read the biographies of every member of the Senate and studied every piece of information I could find on our chief lawmaking body." This was also the man who as a freshman Senator served on two of the busiest committees in the Senate—Appropriations and Interstate Commerce—and never missed a meeting. This was the man who in addition requested to serve on a subcommittee that was formed to study the railroad system and who then "began at once to read all of the records I could locate of earlier testimony concerning the railroads. I read past newspaper accounts of the industry's financial tangles. I ransacked the Library of Congress for every book on the subject of railroad management and history, and at one time had fifty volumes sent by the Library to my office in the Senate Office Building." In short, this was a methodical, hard-working, almost pedantic man who felt most at home with details and who was clearly uncomfortable with any but the simplest abstractions: a personality indeed antithetical to Roosevelt's.

But perhaps the most revealing touch in either of the two volumes of the memoirs is this letter Truman wrote to his mother toward the end of his first week as President. After telling her the story of how he found out that he had become President, he goes into the domestic arrangements:

This afternoon we moved to this house, diagonally across the street (Penn. Ave.) from the White House, until the Roosevelts have had time to move out of the White House. We tried staying at the apartment, but it wouldn't work. I can't move without at least ten Secret Service men and twenty policemen. People who lived in our apartment couldn't get in and out without a pass. So—we moved out with suitcases. Our furniture is still there and will be for some time. . . . But I've paid the rent for this month and will pay for another month if they don't get the old White House redecorated by that time.

Now even allowing for the fact that this is the kind of thing a man might feel would interest his old mother, it is nevertheless astonishing that Truman, who had just been

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through the most overwhelming five days of his life, who had just had the "most momentous, and the most trying time anyone could possibly have," who had just inherited "the most terribly responsible job a man ever had," who "felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen" on him—it is astonishing that this man could have had *rent* on his mind. Astonishing and yet wonderful. Truman is blessed with what can only be called a limited imagination which never allows him to make an unnecessary fuss or to go beyond the strictly relevant considerations of a given problem. "By nature not given to making snap judgments or easy decisions," he tells us, "I required all available facts and information before coming to a decision. But once a decision was made, I did not worry about it afterward." Only a man of limited imagination could have said of the atomic bomb, "Let there be no mistake about it. I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used." Only a man of limited imagination could have said, on seeing the rubble of Hitler's Reich Chancellery, "That's what happens when a man overreaches himself."

And only a man of limited imagination could have been so little awed at Potsdam, confronted by the two greatest figures in world politics when he himself had only just succeeded to the position of the hero who had been the third. Of course he represented the United States, but he was still Harry Truman of Missouri facing Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, and still he was undaunted. "I told them frankly that I did not wish to waste time listening to grievances but wanted to deal with the problems which the three heads of government had come to settle. I said that if they did not get to the main issues I was going to pack up and go home. I meant just that. Stalin laughed heartily and said he did not blame the President for wanting to go home; he wanted to go home too." He also chides Churchill no less than three times for not liking the same kind of music that he and Stalin enjoyed ("Chopin, Liszt, Tschaikowsky and all the rest"). And again he writes to his mother:

> Stalin gave his state dinner night before last, and it was a wow. Started with caviar and vodka and wound up with watermelon and champagne, with smoked fish, fresh fish, venison, chicken, duck and all sorts of vegetables in between. There was a toast every five minutes until at least twenty-five had been drunk. I ate very little and drank less, but it was a colorful and enjoyable occasion. . . . It was a nice dinner.

Of course, we must beware of taking some of these remarks too much at face value. What we have here is another example of Truman's disposition to regard himself as the typical Midwestern American, Tom Sawyer grown up, the prissy Innocent Abroad who is disappointed when princes drink beer like "us common folk" and who finds the Folies Bergère a "disgusting" spectacle, but whose innocence is in the last analysis an assertion of moral superiority. Moreover Truman is not above coyness in this regard. He knows very well that if Churchill and Stalin condescended slightly to him, the joke was on them, just as he knows that in the end his methodical way of doing things was a match for the Churchillian brilliance. When he met Churchill for the first time at Potsdam, he showed the Prime Minister his detailed agenda for the meeting and asked to see his. "I don't need one," said Churchill. (Did Roosevelt need one, we wonder?) Truman lets Churchill's laconic reply pass without comment, but later he makes this observation. "He always found it necessary . . . to make long statements . . . and then agree to what had already been done. . . . On several occasions when Churchill was discussing something at length, Stalin would lean on his elbow, pull on his mustache, and say, 'Why don't you agree? The Americans agree, and we agree. You will agree eventually, so why don't you do it now?' Then the argument would stop. Churchill in the end would agree, but he had to make a speech about it first."

And Truman knows what the impact will be on the reader when he tells the story of how his old schoolmate Charlie Ross, upon being appointed as Truman's press secretary, telephoned Miss Tillie Brown (who had been their teacher in Independence). "You and Harry have made good," Miss Brown said, "and I am very proud of you." What else Miss Brown might have said is difficult to imagine; nevertheless she neither fainted nor shrieked when Truman got on the phone

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to "report" to his old teacher. Ladies like Miss Brown (not to mention his mother) obviously had an enormous influence on his character and their matter-of-fact refusal to make too much even of the Presidency symptomized an attitude that Truman absorbed. Though fascinated by power and greatness, he is genuinely unimpressed with high position *per se*. A job is a job to him and the main thing is to do it well.

TRUMAN's development in the public mind from the colorless "ordinary man" into the symbolic "common man" is one of the major political facts of our time. It would have been fascinating to hear from Truman himself how the revision was accomplished, but on this point he is completely silent. Indeed, he takes such pains to demonstrate the consistency of his political principles over the years as to make it appear that the Presidency changed him not one whit. By his own account he has always been an internationalist in foreign affairs, but there is very little in his background to explain the dramatic burgeoning of a Senator from Missouri who had been mainly interested in taxes and railroads into one of the most responsible international statesmen of history. Similarly he claims always to have been "a Jefferson Democrat living in modern times," the latest representative of a "tradition" that includes Jackson, Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt, and whose distinguishing mark is that it fights for the welfare of "all the people" against "the special crew who has the inside track." From the memoirs it would be impossible to tell that Roosevelt chose Truman as his running mate in 1945 primarily because Truman, as a Border State Senator of reputedly moderate views, was a more acceptable candidate to the conservative wing of the party than Wallace. The only indication Truman gives of the surprise that greeted his twenty-one point Fair Deal message to Congress in September 1945 (from which, incidentally, he dates his assumption of the Presidency in his own right) is this comment made to him by Judge Rosenman:

"You know, Mr. President, this is the most exciting and pleasant surprise I have had in a long time. . . . I suppose I have been listening too much to rumors about what you are going to do—rumors which come from some of your conservative friends, and particularly from some of your former colleagues up on Capitol Hill. They say . . . that a good part of the so-called 'Roosevelt nonsense' is now over . . . that the conservative wing of the party has now taken charge."

Truman could not have had this reputation on Capitol Hill for nothing, though it must have been based on his privately voiced opinions and an estimate of his character, rather than on his voting record (which was consistently New Deal, including support of the measure to pack the Supreme Court).

But the fact is that he believed it to be the President's duty under the Constitution to represent "all the people," as against Congress which mainly provides a voice for special and regional interests. This is one reason why in the White House he came to identify himself more and more closely with the "common people," and, by extension, with minorities like the Jews and Negroes. But his conception of the Presidency was not the only reason for the changes in Truman.

Neither his liberalism nor his increasingly strong anti-Communist foreign policy made him very popular with the most vocal elements in the nation. The press hated him for his reconversion program and for the Fair Deal; many liberals hated him simply for not being Roosevelt (who, they were sure, would have known how to live in peace with the Russians); and, one guesses, many of those associates whom Truman had been trying to please all his life refused to acknowledge that he was the boss and could make all the decisions. Byrnes in particular (like "those striped pants boys in the State Department") seems to have been rather insolent:

[Secretary of State Byrnes'] message told me very little that the newspaper correspondents had not already reported from Moscow. This was not what I considered a proper account by a Cabinet member to the President. It was more like one partner in a business telling the other that his business trip was progressing well and not to worry.

And there are other indications that a good number of the people around Truman were not ready to do him justice.

In any case, Truman's real virtues—his conscientious attention to detail, his ability as an administrator, and most important, his

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decisiveness—did not form a style calculated to excite anyone to rabid admiration, and least of all a nation still enthralled by the spell of Roosevelt's "brilliance." But at some point Truman began to believe that he was *vox populi,* not merely in his Constitutional position, or even merely in his political principles, but in his very soul. He may not have been brilliant, but he was something better: the salt-of-the-earth American writ large—plucky, loyal to his friends, devoted to fair play, outspoken, competent, honest, strong but never bullying. Even his foreign policy (the Marshall Plan, Point Four, and the Truman Doctrine) he saw as a reflection of the American character, *his* character: generosity combined with a principled toughness ("The American people have accomplished much and attained greatness not by the use of force but by industry, ingenuity, and generosity").

The process by which Truman came to regard himself as the quintessential embodiment of the average American is impossible to trace in the memoirs. But there can be no doubt that it was in the 1948 election campaign that he finally succeeded in crystallizing this image and projecting it onto the public mind. In his whistle-stop tour of the country, that "one-man circus" during which he addressed millions and sometimes made a dozen or more speeches a day, he threw away the prepared manuscripts whose stilted rhetoric he always had such trouble mouthing, and spoke extemporaneously for the first time. And the new Truman, the grinning, cocky, vernacular, "give 'em hell" Harry, began to emerge for all to see:

> I simply told the people in my own language that they had better wake up to the fact that it was their fight. If they did not get out and help me win this fight, I emphasized, the Republicans would soon be giving the farmers and the workers the little end of the stick again. I spoke bluntly and sincerely, and warned the people that if they were fools enough to accept the little end again, they deserved it.

It was often vulgar and at times demagogic, but Truman's portrayal of his own character was reinforced by the drama of the campaign itself. How completely he seemed the little man, forsaken and alone, with the newspapers solidly against him, with the public opinion polls insistently predicting his defeat, with the Dixiecrats on the right and the Wallace Progressives on the left agitating against him from out of his own ranks! And when the miracle came to pass and he had won, it seemed to the whole country that his morality-play picture of American political life had been vindicated, that the Good in the person of the average man had triumphed over the clever and the powerful.

A POLITICIAN'S relation to his own public image can be very complicated, and by now it must be impossible for Truman to disentangle the man he "really" is from the figure he has created in our minds. For example, the one image of Truman that is missing almost entirely from the memoirs is that of the shrewd politician dominating the smoke-filled room, in love with the camaraderie of the political game, not to mention the excitements of the poker game. And what of the Truman who seems to have averted his eyes—like the Jacksonian he is—from shady financial dealings in his own administration? How does Truman fit this side of himself into the Mark Twain character he has assumed? By a theory, it would seem. What he appears to see today as he looks back over his career is a peculiarly American success story. He is the poor farm boy who made good by dint of healthy ambition, hard work, faithful service, luck, and mastery of the political craft. But the craft of politics, he reminds us, is two-sided, involving principles on the one hand, and on the other, the ability to muster the support that makes it possible for a politician to realize his principles and become a statesman.

No one can deny that there is an important truth in such a representation of his life, and it would be true even if he was indeed half-aware of the dubious practices of some of his appointees. But we can see quite another moral significance in his career when we contemplate the fact that this extraordinary man who has probably done more than anyone else to keep the world alive on the edge of an apocalypse, was able to emerge into greatness only by becoming, in his own eyes and in the eyes of the nation, a perfect symbol of the average American.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

CHILDHOOD THE WORLD OVER

From Bali to Geselland

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN

HERE then, we have those mysterious children popping in and out of the house, and how are we to discover what makes them tick? We might do well to listen to "the new field of personality and culture," or "personality *in* culture," which is apparently the coming integrative science of man, in which anthropology, psychiatry, psychology, child development, and other disciplines will find their place. At least that is the opinion of Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein, who have produced a substantial anthology on childhood as seen by various experts in the collaborating fields.

American parents are "comrades rather than a *couple* in the French sense," says Françoise Dolto, and "The gangster has become the substitute father of American boys." How does she know? True, she has never been to America, but she is a French child-analyst and has had a number of American patients. American piano lessons tend to be sterile drudgery, suggests Colin McFee. How does he know? He helped a group of Balinese boys form a *gamelan* orchestra, and they learned music in a more creative fashion. Learning is "the primary basis for social stratification, at least in principle," in Jewish culture, says Mark Zborowski, and this emphasis "has diminished little in intensity on different levels of acculturation" in America. How does he know? He grew up in an Eastern European *shtetl,* and he and colleagues have interviewed many Eastern European Jews in the United States. "The German child is prepared in the home to become an independent individual, who, through the practice of willing obedience to parental rules, has learned to obey all rules of his own accord and who, through painful experience, has trained his will to master the problems of life," says Rhoda Métraux. How does she know? She has been reading German child-guidance books.

As these examples may suggest, the study of personality in culture seems to produce insights of varying authority and value. One problem is the relation of any significant trait to the larger configuration. In 1949, Geoffrey Gorer and John Rickman published *The People of Great Russia,* placing great emphasis on swaddling of the child as a determinant of the later adult character, and Ruth Benedict's "Child Rearing in Certain European Countries" appeared posthumously in *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,* warning that swaddling might have a variety of effects, depending on the cultural configuration. These were apparently the poles of opinion in the Columbia Research in Contemporary Cultures project Benedict had inaugurated. In 1954 Mead, who

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Two recent books on child behavior are here reviewed by a writer whose qualifications in the field are both professional and amateur: *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures,* edited by Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein (University of Chicago, 473 pp., $7.50); and *Child Behavior* by Frances L. Ilg, M.D., and Louise Bates Ames, Ph.D. (Harper, 364 pp., $3.95). STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN, who contributes regularly to COMMENTARY, is a *New Yorker* staff writer as well as professor of literature and folk literature at Bennington College. Born in New York in 1919, he now lives in North Bennington, Vt. He is married to Shirley Jackson, the fiction writer, and they have four children. His last previous appearance in this magazine was in September 1954 with a review of H. Idris Bell's *Cults and Creeds in Graeco-Roman Egypt.*

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had inherited the project when Benedict died in 1948, published "The Swaddling Hypothesis: Its Reception" in *The American Anthropologist.* Here, in the name of clearing up "some of the confusions . . . during the last four years regarding the study of cultural character," Mead led a strategic retreat to what was essentially the Benedict position.

MUCH of *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures,* edited by Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein, reflects this new sophistication, with the emphasis on configuration rather than the isolable trait, as Mead explains in her introduction:

"But, while striking differences in behavior may give rapid clues to important differences in the whole pattern, it is important to realize that it is not any single item of child-rearing practice or of culturally patterned child behavior—not the presence or absence of feeding bottles or slates, skates or hoops or balls, prayers or homilies or bribes—which is significant in isolation. It is the way in which all these thousands of items, most of which are shared with other cultures, some of which are shared with all other cultures, are patterned or fitted together to make a whole."

Some of the contributors, however, are still unreconstructed. One of Wolfenstein's contributions, "Some Variants in Moral Training of Children," a cross-cultural study involving interviews with parents of Chinese, Czech, Eastern European Jewish, and Syrian origin, was first published in 1950, cites Benedict's article, and goes happily ahead showing how characteristic modes of nursing, swaddling, and toilet-training determine personality and character.

The emphasis on these readily discernible "striking differences" in national character arose during the war, when anthropology was mobilized to study the cultures of occupied and enemy countries that could not be studied in the field, and here we encounter the much debated "study of culture at a distance." I would say that Margaret Mead is one of the finest field workers alive, and that one of the reasons she is so good is that she is a natural snoop. "Peeking over a house wall, one may see . . ." she writes in her marvelous essay, "Children and Ritual in Bali." (In *Growth and Culture,** a book on Balinese children done in collaboration, Mead admitted that the Balinese village she worked in was chosen in part because its household walls were "loosely constructed fences through which it was easy to see what was taking place.") It is precisely this quality of texture, of the richness of intimately observed behavior—in short, of snooping—that is lacking in her article written in collaboration with Elena Calas, "Child-Training Ideals in a Postrevolutionary Context: Soviet Russia." Where Wolfenstein is studying culture at a distance (a thematic analysis of "The Image of the Child in Contemporary Films") she is terrible; where she gets closer to it (French children observed in the park) she makes some convincing observations; where she is saturated in it (clinical experience with "Two Types of Jewish Mothers" and their children) she is wonderful. When Wolfenstein describes Mrs. S, one of her two types of Jewish mother, warning her son that a woman across the street was actually aggravated *to death* by her son, she is talking about something; when she generalizes from half a dozen Italian films that "An older ideal of womanly purity and virtue, which seems to have lost its hold on other western cultures, remains in the ascendant in Italy," she is talking about nothing, and the significant difference in the language shows it.

FROM the perspective of personality in culture, another recent book on childhood, *Child Behavior,* a publication of the Gesell Institute of Child Development, speaks for a culture that is neither Western civilization nor the United States, but a place we might call Geselland. The language of Geselland uses exclamation points as the Hottentot tongue uses clicks, so that they say, "The mother-child relationship! The first, and one of the most important and exciting that the human being ever experiences!" In Geselland every couple has one child who occupies their exclusive attention (although they borrow another one, apparently, for the sibling rivalry rites). They live in cities where the schools have psychologists and guidance teachers, the mothers are "modern mothers in their wish to follow modern methods," the fathers take the children to the dentist "to overcome resistance," and both parents are preternaturally eager to learn anything that will contribute to the welfare of their child, al-

Growth and Culture, by Margaret Mead and Frances Cooke Macgregor. Based upon photographs by Gregory Bateson analyzed in Gesell Categories (Putnam's).

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though reading about problems like "insecurity" makes them worry. Wolfenstein needs an article to summarize the behavior of French children in the park, but Ilg and Ames have been down to the Geselland playground so many times that they can recreate it in a paragraph:

"However, even by the time some children are two and a half, you can help them to develop techniques for getting along with friends. You can tell Joey, 'Talk to Jimmy, don't hit him,' if Joey is a hitter. Or, 'What can Danny have instead?' if you are addressing a grabber. Or, 'Let Mary have a turn now,' or, 'You can have it after Betty is finished.' "

This is perhaps unfair, since *Child Behavior* is a popularization, pieced together from a syndicated newspaper column of the same name that Ilg and Ames produce. One would never guess from it that Dr. Ames was the author of "Precursor Signs of Plantigrade Progression" in *The Journal of Genetic Psychology,* or Dr. Ilg a collaborator in equally learned publications. But popularization is a kind of projective test or vehicle for self-revelation too, and it often shows more nakedly than technical writings the tendencies of a movement. Just as the Balinese child is seen as a small adult, the Syrian child as a vessel to be filled, or the German child as a plant to be cultivated, the child in Geselland is seen as a fertile seed or egg that "grows" and "unfolds" according to some built-in plan. "Growth, growth," says Dr. Gesell's foreword to the book. "Behavior grows!" the authors begin, with a click. The emphasis is on order, measure, "norms and standards of development," "watching the growing infant as he unfolds" or twitching nervously when growth "possibly doesn't unfold or move."

The metaphors that cannot be countenanced see the child as something limitlessly plastic, "a lump of clay," or as something primarily determined by the culture or "mother's treatment of the baby." This seed-egg figure may be a popular image deliberately substituted for the Gesell group's more scientific and dialectic image of the spiral of development, but it may equally reflect an unconscious ideal in the authors. There is at least one certainly unconscious metaphor for the child buried deep in *Child Behavior,* underlying the suggestions that newspaper be placed in a corner of the bathroom floor for difficult excretory cases, a police whistle be bought to summon the dilatory child, and a biter be dealt with by muzzling with an adult hand.

In this culture, the nature of the child is known, not only because it is all built in from the start, but because it classifies readily into easily identifiable physical and temperamental types: Sheldon's constitutional typing of endomorph (fat and lazy), mesomorph (muscular and active), and ectomorph (thin and shy); a division into "focal" and "peripheral" personalities (one concentrates and the other diffuses); Kanner's "autistic" or solitary personality and its sociable opposite; and even an ultimate typing: "Children can almost be placed in two different groups, those who love peanut butter and those who don't." From the vantage point of these fixities, syndicated shamans can do a number of things for parents: consoling ("You can be prevented from feeling too much surprise or discouragement"); coaching ("And don't be above using guile"); indoctrinating ("Try to recognize and respect your child's basic, inborn individuality"); laying down the law ("We do not recommend spanking for this behavior"); and cooling-off ("This information may help you to keep down your expectations").

IN ALL this emphasis on growth and culture, it is not surprising that the voice chiefly identified in our time wtih unchanging instincts and biological limitation, Sigmund Freud's, is seldom heard. Erik H. Erikson is the only contributor to *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* who overtly resists the prevailing cultural emphasis. His article on "Sex Differences in the Play Configurations of American Adolescents" notes "how many questions remain unanswered if a one-sided cultural explanation is accepted as the sole basis for the sex differences expressed in these configurations." Wolfenstein has Freudian moments, as when she gives the traditional phallic reading of "Jack and the Beanstalk," or suggests brilliantly that American "fun morality" may be "a new kind of defense against impulses," or ends her concluding chapter on a tribute to Freud's humanistic vision. Else Frenkel-Brunswik turns briefly to "depth psychology" for a "dynamic" dimension to her environmental study of family backgrounds. Robert Sunley finds in studying 19th-century American child-rearing literature, somewhat to his surprise, that American Calvinist ideas about the child were more realistic in recognizing his sexual and aggressive drives

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than later optimistic thought. (The paper on "Freud, Infant Damnation, and Total Depravity" still remains to be written, and would clear the air wonderfully.)

Child Behavior is, as could be expected, sharply anti-Freudian. When little girls attempt to urinate standing up, "This is a perfectly normal experiment and not in our opinion a sign that they have 'penis envy' or have been overexposed to little boys." The emphasis is always away from the psyche: "Reasonable experimentation with laxatives and experimenting with a relaxing diet should certainly be tried before you conclude that your child's constipation is an 'emotional' problem." There is even a slash of Occam's Razor at Freud: "However, in keeping with the principle of never seek a complicated explanation when a simple one will do, don't seek 'deep' reasons and complicated therapy unless you're sure that something simple will not suffice"—which we might translate as "Never seek a reason when a rationalization will do." With endomorphic personalities, quoting Sheldon, "Nothing is ever choked or held back. There is no emotional inhibition"; when the authors encounter an uncontrollable little boy with no discernible superego, they conclude sourly "this boy's personality was the thing at fault"; when they encounter the little boy who prefers to dress up as a girl and play with dolls, he is "the feminine" type. Characteristically, masturbation is always treated as a "tensional outlet," and the remedy for it, as for all childhood sexuality, is "providing ideas for something better to do." For adolescent sexuality, the remedy is "providing a child with a view of himself and his life plan and life role which is not consistent with getting early sex expression and fulfillment." Against adult sexuality, that well-known tensional outlet, something worse to do, and disrupter of life roles, the authors tactfully offer no recommendations.

Despite all the emphasis on culture, social and economic realities seem to play little part in it. All the people of Geselland are middle class, and they apparently have their days free for child-watching. In *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures,* Mead notes the value to the child of the extensive adult leisure in her Balinese village, but never relates it to wealth-getting activities or economic margin. Her conclusion to the book contains one of its few mentions of class differences as a factor in child care in our own culture. The most interesting case is that of Frenkel-Brunswik, who compares an authoritarian and a democratic family while specifically excluding "social and economic determinants" from consideration, choosing families of roughly similar stations. Nevertheless, she is so strongly concerned with social implications, noting "fascistic attitudes" in her authoritarian family (which is of German origin) and how they might come "to the fore" after "social upheavals of a major sort," that it finally becomes obvious that she is writing a political parable, a cautionary tale about Good Germans, Bad Germans, and the rise of Hitler, and that its purpose is to warn.

THROUGH all the glossy new gadgetry of method in these books a kind of old-fashioned rationalism peeks out. *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* deals extensively with such symbolic expressions as art and rituals, but it is never in their own terms, always as didacticism or projective test. Mead sees works of literature as clear designs whose intentions "miscarry" if the audience gets anything not "carefully and creatively planned," and the hopeful directions of her conclusion—constructively loaded juvenile books, constructively loaded dramatic performances, and pious group conferences—are neither so novel nor so innocent as she might think. Wolfenstein shows in some comments on Dickens and Dostoevsky that she has only the dimmest sense of how novels differ from tracts, and her one impressive literary insight, the significant "national character" difference in the endings of *Oliver Twist* and *Huck Finn,* turns out to be W. H. Auden's. Ilg and Ames remark "They seldom ask, 'How shall I tell him about war?'—though war, to our way of thinking, is much harder to explain than sex." This would be rather a nice joke if it were a joke, but it is apparently a serious statement, suggesting that the authors will recognize Eros, the life instinct, at least as a tensional outlet, but never Thanatos, the death instinct. A letter they quote approvingly shows how beautiful death can be when "The cemetery has no tombstones permitted and truly looks like a beautiful park." They simply do not credit the possibility of hostile or destructive elements in the personality. In their culture, the adopted child is always "a chosen child—desired, selected and doubly cherished for this reason," never, say, a vessel the adopting parents fill with the guilt and reproaches they feel about their sterility.

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All these ladies have a curious owlish quality, humorless and gullible. Wolfenstein gives a weighty analysis of a French child's drawing of an arrow, which the child explained was a picture of a hunter shooting a bird, the hunter not in the picture because he had released the arrow, the bird not pictured because it had been missed. (This, doctor, is a joke, and that child may yet grow up to publish French Droodles.) Frenkel-Brunswik finds her democratic home admirable in part because the mother, a social worker who has been analyzed, divorced but "on good terms" with her husband, talks about her daughter as follows:

"I do hope that she will do something that will make her happy and at the same time be constructive. I hope the girl will have experience early enough that she can integrate it and lead an outgoing, constructive life; that she won't have to spend so long working out her aggression that she finds herself no longer young—not that I wish to spare my daughter the suffering and experience necessary for development, but I hope she may get it early and fast. I feel that I can help by giving a lot of trust and confidence in the girl. I do feel that at times in the past I may have expected too high a performance for the sake of my own gratification, and that may have troubled Peggy. The child has been given more responsibility than the average, but as a rule it hasn't seemed to be a strain."

It never occurs to Frenkel-Brunswik that the easy jargon of understanding can be as readily used to obfuscate relations as to reveal them, and if her account of the authoritarian family is like taking the cover off a sewer, this is like riffling through the yellowing pages of *PM*.

These attitudes are characteristically accompanied by a general contempt for the arts of language. *Child Behavior* is written entirely in Gesell, the click of exclamation points and the soft wet thud of nursery-school slogans. German and French are translated in *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* as one gets cocktail onions out of the bottle, with savage jabs, and the contributors quickly shift from English to Newspeak. Even David Riesman's enormously impressive chapter from *The Lonely Crowd*, showing the dangerous nonsense in a children's book called *Tootle*, ends at the apocalyptic moment when "the self-confirming process of the peer group pushes preference exchange to the point of parody." The use of the first-person plural in these books seems significant. Ilg and Ames have a chummy "we" that includes authors and reader-parents, as in "We can try to smooth over the child's 'worse' stages." Wolfenstein attacks the false and misleading "we" of the nursery school, as in "We don't hit," which pretends that teacher and child are age-mates. Her own first-person plural goes to the other extreme. In "We have come to consider the child's nature as totally harmless and beneficent," or "In America we tend quickly to forget on the conscious level what we have put behind us or outgrown," it specifically excludes herself and simply means "you benighted readers."

It is hard to separate problems of methodology raised by these approaches from the personal limitations of authors and editors. Ilg and Ames are solidly configurational, insisting "But here as always the total child in the total situation should be the primary consideration." Much of *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* is similarly enlightened. But cultural configurations can oversimplify and distort too (as Boas showed in his comments on Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, noting that one would never realize from it that her aggressive and destructive Kwakiutl were warm and kindly parents). Studying the total child in the total situation, whether the nursery school and clinic of Ilg and Ames, or Mead's "live children" in "play groups" and "real children in analytic situations," runs us into the variant of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle that bedevils the social sciences, the fact that the very act of observation, the presence of teacher or doctor, dislocates things to the point where accurate observation is impossible. When Mead and Macgregor tried to validate the Gesell categories for a non-literate culture in *Growth and Culture*, they properly found that the categories had to be altered at key points. When Mead announced that what Gesell calls "ulnar grasp" (holding with the fingers furthest from the thumb) relates to a general Balinese "lack of focus and goal orientation," she was engaged in using the categories as though they were already valid for Bali, and was trying to put what she decided from field study as though it had been learned or could be learned from motor behavior.

Another problem is of course the reliability of the informant. Anthropologists have increas-

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ingly been coming to realize that many of their pictures of primitive cultures are no more than what the old men (who tend, for a variety of obvious reasons, to be the principal informants) wish were so or believe was so in the happier past. Some of *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* is obviously idealized reality of this sort, particularly the Zborowski article, which tends to picture East European *shtetl* life as a golden age of piety and learning. His statement, for example, that the Jewish ideal of male beauty was and is pale, deep-set-eyed, and scholarly seems to me (perhaps because I am a florid endomorph) extraordinarily unlikely. In Geselland, inevitably, only one wise old informant is ever used, and the authors clear up disputed matters with the simple "Dr. Gesell has commented on this subject."

Where these works are most useful, in my opinion, is in their strongly implied criticisms of our own culture. One of the articles in *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures,* Benedict's classic 1938 paper, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning," demonstrates the crippling discontinuities in our own culture (in which the child learns roles of irresponsibility, submission, and asexuality which it must then painfully unlearn in order to function as an adult) by showing how various American Indian and Pacific cultures avoid these discontinuities or minimize them through such devices as age grades and ritual ceremonies. Erikson's remarkable "Sex Differences in the Play Configurations of American Adolescents" shows how much can be made of projective behavior when the analyst feels the culture on his own hide, whether by being enough moved by a withdrawn girl to permit himself "the clinical luxury of one non-standardized question," or by being painfully aware of caste factors when a disturbed Negro boy dramatizes ultimate "lowness" by building his structure of blocks *under* the table.

Ilg and Ames love their culture, and even welcome television for "its real educational value," but they too sometimes suggest that it has not entirely encapsulated all virtue. They note that some primitive peoples feature "the self-demand and self-regulation schedules which many pediatricians now recommend," and some of their anecdotes, such as one in which a newborn baby sent daily gifts from the hospital to his sib and was welcomed on arrival home, suggest their appreciation of cultures in which gift-giving and reciprocity are ceremonial and institutionalized. In *Growth and Culture,* Mead notes that anthropological findings are welcomed in America if they underline plasticity and resisted if they document limits, that is, that we will only accept assurances that human possibility is open and infinite. She makes clear that the book's intention is not primarily to tell us about Bali but to "give us much greater understanding of what is happening to our children," and concludes "We can develop our culture" in certain preferable Balinese directions.

As CRITICS of America, these ladies have certain obvious difficulties. Mead and Wolfenstein have produced an ethnocentric and culture-bound book, not by intention, surely, but because the cultures they could get suitable child material on, except for Bali, are all too similar, more like subcultures of Western civilization than independent organic wholes (here some of Mead's own work on the Manus or Arapesh would have helped enormously). Ilg and Ames have not set foot outside Geselland for many years. The personality and culture field seems to be inevitably gyno-centered, and Mead remarks sharply, "Although there are distinguished male workers in the field . . . it is probably not an accident that all of them have worked closely with woman teachers or collaborators." She appears to recommend "collaborative two-sex teams" (why not three-sex or four-sex?) in line with the general faith of our time that teamwork and "integration" will solve whatever problems individuals cannot. *Growth and Culture,* we might note, involved the collaboration of a dozen people, plus a theoretical hash of Gesell, Erikson, Lawrence Frank, Cybernetics, and a group conference of other experts. With all these voices joining in, debate gets promptly on to a high level of philosophic abstraction: growth or training, determinism or plasticity, biology or culture, nature or nurture. Through all this hubbub, the child crawls ignored between the adult legs, relieving tension by picking his nose, growing up as best he can.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Fraternity Discrimination

To the Editor of Commentary:

I should like to address a few comments to Mr. Rorty concerning the rather hopeful tone of his article in the February issue of Commentary. I quite agree with him that the fraternity discrimination problem is much improved in the larger universities in this country, but there still remains much to be done at the smaller colleges, and not much is being done. The courageous steps taken by the administration at Amherst College have not been duplicated in many places. Indeed, the more usual attitude taken by college administrative staffs is one of . . . passive agreement with the outmoded concept that "the fraternity has an inherent right to be selective. . . ."

It may be quite true that the alumni trustees of the various national fraternities are, in many instances, most directly responsible for the persistence of the various restrictive covenants and "gentlemen's agreements" in their fraternities, but they are not solely responsible. The undergraduate members of many of the fraternities are often themselves quite devoted to the principle of social segregation because of religion or color. This persistent tendency to preserve the restrictions is probably most noticeable in the smaller rural colleges. . . . The Jewish students from urban areas still find it tough sledding when it comes to fraternity acceptance at a rural college. They are said to be "more Jewish" than the occasional non-urban Jew who comes to the college. This form of narrowness in fraternity rushing policy, can, I feel, be far more insidious than the open segregation practiced at a large university where the principle of "separate but equal" holds forth. At the rural college the Jewish fraternities have still to find a foothold. Often it is not a matter of an insufficient number of Jewish students to maintain such a fraternity, but rather an administrative fiat which keeps the Jewish fraternities off the campus. The administrations hide behind a guise of gradual integration, and thus prevent even this inferior solution to the problem of the Jewish student from being carried through. . . .

Daniel Thau Teitelbaum
Hamilton College
Clinton, New York

"Pudd'nhead Wilson"

To the Editor of Commentary:

I read with great interest F. R. Leavis's "Mark Twain's Neglected Classic" in your February 1956 issue. I take second place to no one in my admiration for Mark Twain, but I believe that *Pudd'nhead Wilson* . . . [is] not so much a forgotten classic as a piece of literary exercise. . . .

Dr. Leavis says: ". . . An obvious criticism lies against the unfulfilled promise represented by the twins." Presumably he is not unaware of the companion piece to *Pudd'nhead Wilson* entitled *Those Extraordinary Twins*, which explains the mystery and frankly acknowledges the fact that *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is a patchwork; but I think *Those Extraordinary Twins* is worth mentioning; in fact that you can't discuss the one without the other. In the foreword to the latter book Mark Twain says: "Originally the story (*P.W.*) was called 'Those Extraordinary Twins.' . . . I had seen a picture of a youthful Italian 'freak' . . . a combination consisting of two heads and four arms joined to a single body and a single pair of legs—and I thought I would write an extravagantly fantastic little story with this freak of nature for hero. . . . But . . . other people began intruding themselves." These were Wilson, Roxy, and Tom Driscoll. They took over the story and when the author looked around for his original characters he found them "stranded, idle, forgotten, and permanently useless." What to do with them? "I thought and thought and studied and studied; but I arrived at nothing." He toys with the idea of having all his superfluous characters fall down a well; but that's unsatisfactory so he leaves them in. As a result: "The defect turned out to be . . . two stories in one, a farce and a tragedy. So I pulled out the farce and left the tragedy." He took the trouble to separate the twins, to reduce if not eliminate the farcical aspects of the story. . . .

It seems to me *Pudd'nhead Wilson* should be considered in the light of a very quick, undeveloped sketch, which it obviously is, because to think of it in terms of a "classic" is unfair to the real classics Mark Twain wrote.

I do not think that this lightweight soap opera really offers any insight into the author's feeling about race. If his point was that con-

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ditioning, not inheritance, makes the man, he would have been careful not to go to such extremes; not to make a horrendous villain out of a mere weakling whose background had conduced to petty delinquency rather than crime.

Oddly enough, *Those Extraordinary Twins,* the left-over story which in my edition (American Publishing Company, 1894) is appended to *Pudd'nhead Wilson,* is a hundred times funnier than you would possibly imagine a "freak" story could be, and if there is a neglected classic here, I vote for it.

GRACE W. PIERCE

Boston, Massachusetts

MR. LEAVIS *writes:*

I did indeed know of *Those Extraordinary Twins,* but I do not agree that it and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* constitute together an "Italian freak." Nor, in my opinion, do the facts that Miss Pierce presents tend in any way either to prove me wrong, or to show (even if facts of that kind could) that *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is a patchwork. On the contrary, I find nothing but confirmation in her scholarship. "But . . . other people began intruding themselves": this is a note, not (surely!) on the botching up of a patchwork, but on the genesis of an inspired work of imagination, a living thing (I need not remind Miss Pierce of the more famous cases of the kind). Wilson, Roxy, and Tom Driscoll, she says, "took over the story." To the inspired "tragedy" that resulted the "farce" is wholly irrelevant: there is not the slightest ground for contradicting Mark Twain's judgment. To *Pudd'nhead Wilson* there is no farcical aspect, and nothing approaching one (unless for prisoners of the convention that twins are *intrinsically* farcical).

I wish that *Those Extraordinary Twins* could have been—could be—forgotten: its association with the other tale about twins has certainly played its part in the neglect of a classic of the English language. That *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is such is, of course, not a fact of scholarship, but a critical judgment, and a critical judgment cannot be coercively demonstrated. Pointing to the essential fact, the created thing, and making the commentary that seems to one called for, one appeals, implicitly, for agreement, even though one anticipates that the responses most worth having will often be in the form "Yes, but—." I am sorry that an authority on Mark Twain should feel that, for her, there can be no "Yes" in it at all. But what I point to seems to me, still, clearly—and irresistibly—what I judged it to be.

F. R. LEAVIS

Downing College
Cambridge, England

The Pharisees

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Irresponsible quoting out of context has all too often provided misleading and damaging information to readers who may not have the time or resources to check. . . .

An example of such quoting is found in Rabbi Jakob Petuchowski's article "The Pharisaic Tradition Today" (February COMMENTARY). Rabbi Petuchowski, to illustrate the scorn of the Pharisees toward the *am ha-aretz,* quotes Rabbi Eleazar as having stated (Babylonian Talmud): "It is permitted to stab an *am ha-aretz* on a Day of Atonement which coincides with the Sabbath." Out of context, this appears as a dreadful, merciless, vituperative remark, which reflects in an ugly manner upon Rabbi Eleazar and the tradition he represented.

In fact, however, the passage goes on in such a way as to leave not the slightest doubt that Rabbi Eleazar spoke *in jest,* as is proved by the impossible question his disciples pose next, and the answer Eleazar gives to it. Not by any stretch of the imagination could his words have been taken seriously.

The word "stab" is translated by Rabbi Petuchowski from the Hebrew *nahor* which, in the passage from Pesachim 49, must imply: to put to death by piercing the windpipe. *Nahor* is used in contradistinction to *shahot,* which is the drawing of a knife across the throat of an animal, with a clean cut (ritual slaughter).

The whole text reads: R. Eleazar said: "An *am-ha-aretz,* it is permitted to stab him [even] on the Day of Atonement which falls on the Sabbath." His disciples said to him: "Master [rather than stabbing him in the windpipe—*nahor],* say to slaughter him [ritually—*shahot*]?"

He replied: "This [*shahot*] requires a benediction, whereas that [*nahor*] does not require a benediction."

The tradition that taught, in the name of R. Gamaliel: "He who has mercy on God's creatures will obtain mercy from heaven" (*Shabbat* 151b), in the last analysis could not have excluded the unlearned creature of God.

STANLEY M. KESSLER

West Hartford, Conn.

RABBI PETUCHOWSKI *writes:*

When, after quoting Rabbi Eleazar and Rabbi Akiba, I added the remark: "No doubt, the bark was fiercer than the bite," it should have been obvious to all who, like Mr. Kessler, prefer to read statements *in context* that I did not put a literalist interpretation on these statements. And we need hardly refer to the

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fine sentiment in *Shabbat* 151b in order to realize that the Rabbis did not seriously contemplate a breach of the fundamental Biblical law that prohibits murder! But whether, as Mr. Kessler insists, we are dealing with a *mere* jest is quite a different question. These "jesting" statements are introduced in a page of the Talmud which lays it down *as law* that a man must not marry the daughter of an *am ha-aretz*. Such "intermarriage" is then described—"jestingly," as Mr. Kessler might say—as being analogous to bestiality. Further illustrations from the realm of sexual aberrations are then adduced to evaluate other instances of such "intermarriages," as well as the act of studying Torah in the presence of the *am-ha-aretz*. We also read about various *legal* disqualifications of the *am ha-aretz*. This, Mr. Kessler will have to agree, is the *context* in which we find Rabbi Eleazar's statement. I am convinced that he did not mean it literally; but I happen to think too highly of that rabbi to credit him, as Mr. Kessler apparently does, with the sort of sense of humor which would construe the statement in question as "funny."

Apparently Mr. Kessler failed to realize that I cited the statement in order to highlight a characteristic aspect of Pharisaism, one in sharp contrast to that present popular view of the Pharisees which sees them as democratic levelers. That I personally do not condemn the Pharisaic renunciation of *am ha-aratzut*, but regard it rather as a desideratum for modern Jewish life, might have been obvious to Mr. Kessler had he read the quotation from Rabbi Eleazar in the full context of my articles.

JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI
Washington, Pennsylvania

Prejudice and Personality

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As an admirer of both Kenneth Clark and Bruno Bettelheim, I should like to comment on the latter's review of Clark's *Prejudice and Your Child* (April issue), in which Bettelheim challenges Clark's thesis that prejudice is harmful to the child's personality. . . .

The disagreement seems to stem from differing conceptions of what is meant by personality, and such terms as "stability," "adjustment," "insecurity," and possibly also the nature of psychological evidence. Bettelheim apparently regards personality as unrelated to any specific social context. Clark takes the point of view of the social psychologist. Bettelheim cites the historical Greek civilization and the Germany of his childhood as illustrations of how healthy personality may develop in what we would regard as an atmosphere of prejudice. However, we are concerned with the conflict between ideology and practice in contemporary American democratic culture which has been powerfully depicted in Myrdal's *American Dilemma*. From the point of view of the social psychologist, the conflicting norms of equality and inequality in our culture are internalized and create an ambivalence which is damaging to members of both minority and majority groups.

It is true, as Bettelheim states, the effects of this process will not be uniform for every individual, in every situation, or for all groups. Also the factors which determine the individual's "stability" are numerous, and we do not at present have enough knowledge to be able to weight these factors in relation to each other. However, it is scientific to study a single factor such as prejudice even though we do not have the key to the total pattern.

It should be noted that Clark's contention that prejudice is damaging to personality development has impressive support. For the effects on children in minority groups, we can refer to the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth (Witmer and Kotinsky: *Personality in the Making*. Chapter 6); Kurt Lewin's essays; and more recently Kardiner and Oversey: *The Mark of Oppression*. Documentation for the effects of prejudice on members of the dominant group will be found in Dollard: *Caste and Class in a Southern Town;* Adorno: *The Authoritarian Personality;* Lillian Smith: *Killers of the Dream*, and numerous writers of fiction, particularly Faulkner.

Granted the complexity of the subject and the preliminary rather than definitive nature of Clark's statement. But Bettelheim is in error in characterizing Clark's volume as unscientific. . . .

HENRY MILLER
The School of Education
The City College
New York, N. Y.

New Haven County

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article "The Return of Two-Party Politics" (March 1956), Samuel Lubell states erroneously that New Haven was won by President Eisenhower in his 1952 landslide.

Actually, New Haven was carried in the presidential election of 1952 by Stevenson with 45,990 votes against Eisenhower's 39,952.

HANS BRONNER
New Haven, Connecticut

MR. LUBELL *writes:*

"New Haven" was an error: it should have read "New Haven County."

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Christian-Jewish Dialogue?

THE BRIDGE. A YEARBOOK OF JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN STUDIES, VOLUME I. Edited by JOHN M. OESTERREICHER. Pantheon. 349 pp. $3.95.

Reviewed by JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI

TRADITIONALLY the Christian Church has had an ambivalent attitude towards Judaism. On the one hand, the Jews were the people who, being singled out by grace to have the Messiah born into their midst, were yet so blind as to reject him. On the other hand, the Jews were, after all, the Chosen People, the descendants, if only in the flesh, of that Israel to whom the Sinaitic Covenant had been vouchsafed, custodians of the Law which is accepted by the Church as "the schoolmaster leading unto Christ." Hence the special position of the Jews in the divine scheme of things could not be gainsaid—at any rate, not as long as Jesus' life, death, and resurrection were understood as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. The day would surely come when the eyes of the unbelieving Jew would be opened, and when, at long last accepting their true Messiah, the Israel of the flesh would again become part of the Israel of the spirit. The Jews are, in the words of one of the contributors to this volume, the Christians' "elder brother," and they must be treated with "the deference due pioneers, believers whose very downfall stems from zeal."

Meanwhile, however, the continued existence of this unregenerate people could only be an irritant—as irritating to the 1st-century author of *The Epistle of Barnabas* as to the 20th-century author of *A Study of History*. Nor have the last two thousand years been lacking in attempts to get rid of this irritant. Sweet reasonableness alternated with violent invective, and forced "disputations" often served as the prelude to the stake. And all the while there grew up an immense literature, trying to demonstrate, in one form or another, that the literary sources of Judaism—and not only the Biblical, but even the Rabbinical—unmistakably point to Jesus as the Christ. One of the great classics in this genre is Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*, written in the 2nd century. In this work, the Church Father has a rather amicable discussion with a cultured Jewish gentleman, who makes so many concessions to the Christian's claims that, on this basis alone, modern scholars have doubted his reality. Put bluntly, the Trypho of Justin's *Dialogue* was a "straw man," and the Church Father had no trouble "knocking him down"—even though Justin wore kid gloves in the encounter.

The volume under discussion makes much of the fact that in Justin's *Dialogue* the two contestants conclude by praying for one another, and the hope is expressed that *The Bridge* will likewise "lead to love." But love requires understanding, and understanding knowledge; and so it is the express purpose of *The Bridge* to disseminate that knowledge which alone can lead to a friendly theological meeting of Jews and Christians.

With this purpose in mind, the book offers a number of studies, essays, and reviews by Catholic scholars trying to show that, in the words of Pius XI, "spiritually we are Semites." The Catholic has a profound sympathetic interest in Jews and Judaism. Witness the Church's dissociation from Marcion's anti-Jewish gnosticism, reiterated here by Monsignor John J. Dougherty. Witness Barry Ulanov's skilful proof that Portia's "quality of mercy" in *The Merchant of Venice* leaves as much to be desired as Shylock's "justice." Witness, too, Father Pierre Charles's meticulous demonstration that "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" is a forgery, and Father Keller's condemnation of the Nazi slaughter of six million Jews.

The Jewish reader feels reassured. The Catholics speaking to him in *The Bridge* are his friends. And, being his friends, what they have to say deserves respectful attention. What, then, do they have to say?

BASICALLY, it is what the Church has been

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saying to the Jew all along. Of course, these representatives of the Church are not as crude in their efforts as are some of the worthies discussed by A. Lukyn Williams in his *Adversus Judaeos: A Bird's-Eye View of Christian Apologiae until the Renaissance* (Cambridge University Press, 1935). They are all extremely polite. Nevertheless, they are saying much the same thing. *The Bridge,* then, is not an example of what Catholics can achieve in the realm of pure scholarship (although one expects such scholarship from a volume announcing itself as a *Yearbook of Judaeo-Christian Studies*). It is not even an attempt by Catholic writers to show that they are really aware of the Jewish position on the points at issue between the Synagogue and the Church. The book simply gives us a number of expositions of the central Christian dogmas, using as "proof texts" certain facets of Jewish literature, thought, and life.

As in most symposia, the individual contributions are of unequal merit, though some reflect the nature of the whole enterprise a little more clearly than others. Thus, for example, Father Barnabas M. Ahern's study on "The Exodus, Then and Now" is merely a modern specimen of the "typological" interpretation of the Old Testament so dear to the old Church Fathers, and as unconvincing to the modern Jew as it was to his medieval forbear. This method of interpretation attempts to derive from the Old Testament, with unconcealed Christian bias, not only some vague foreshadowing of later New Testament "fulfillments," but concrete images which show the Old Testament authors to have been fully aware of Christian imagery and symbols. It would follow, then, that a belief in the inspiration of the Hebrew Bible *must* lead to the acceptance of Christian dogma. For instance, the "tree" in Exodus 15: 25 which had the magical quality of making sweet the bitter waters of Marah can be regarded as the *type* of the Christian cross, while the same "type" is evident in the "crossing" of Jacob's hands when he was blessing his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48: 14). (These two illustrations of typological interpretation are not given by Father Ahern, but are taken from Rabbi Yomtov Lipman Muehlhausen's *Sefer Ha-nitzachon,* a medieval Jewish work of apologetics and polemics in which these and similar "arguments" are refuted.)

The Rabbis themselves were not, of course, innocent of this kind of exegesis. The Midrash is full of it. But, as A. Lukyn Williams (who was himself interested in converting Jews to Christianity) rightly remarks in his above-mentioned book, "Jews never attributed to such Midrashic and Haggadic methods the force of proof in the strictest sense." Such interpretations "had, no doubt, their own benefit for devout souls, but could not possibly serve as proofs to establish any doctrine." The Christian writers using this typological interpretation simply "never understood the mind of the Jews."

If, then, Father Ahern informs us that "Christian life fulfills the typology of Israel's exodus because it is life in Christ and a full sharing in His wondrous mysteries," and if, by way of proof, he shows how the details of Jesus' redemptive career match the details of the Exodus story in the Hebrew Bible, he does indeed give us an interesting piece of Christian midrash which can be appreciated in its own right. But the reverend Father fails to reckon with the sense of humor which has always been an active ingredient of both the production and the appreciation of Jewish midrash. That there is a strong connection between the story of the Exodus and that of the Resurrection of Jesus, I would not want to deny, but it is found on a level quite different from the one selected by Father Ahern. It could, for example, be claimed that the whole New Testaman account of Jesus has consciously been written as a midrash on the Passover drama (First Redemption—Last Redemption, or, in Rabbinic parlance, *pesach mitzrayim* and *pesach le'atid*). It might even be said that both the Jewish story (Redemption from Slavery) and the Christian story (Redemption from Death) are, in their own ways, merely adaptations or reinterpretations of motifs inherent in nature religion, and going back to the spring festivals of prehistoric times.

Mother Marie Thaddea de Sion's essay on "The Jewish Burial Service" is interesting as a demonstration of how far, and how thoroughly, a Catholic can become familiar with aspects of Jewish life. But it hardly constitutes a contribution to "scholarship." Still, it is suggestive to discover about the Jewish burial service that "there are few words in it, if any, that a Christian could not pray, though some he would understand in a different spirit." Yet Mother

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Marie "misses the voice which alone can say: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'" This, no doubt, is meant to show the insufficiency of Judaism. But it is merely evidence of the author's personal feeling. *She* misses that "voice." The Orthodox Jew, however, without benefit of that particular "voice," has the requisite faith and conviction to recite the Burial Kaddish: "Glorified and sanctified be God's great name throughout the world which He will renew, *reviving the dead, and bringing them to eternal life. . . .*"

Raissa Maritain has a fine piece on "Abraham and the Ascent of Conscience" which contrasts favorably with the now popular treatment of the same Biblical character by Kierkegaard. Yet here, too, the author cannot refrain from pitting the "New Law" which "derives its pre-eminence from the very grace of the Holy Spirit given inwardly to believers" against the "Old Law which consisted chiefly of deeds." This invidious comparison, natural to a Gnostic, psychologically intelligible in a St. Paul, and possibly excusable in a Protestant, is ill-befitting a Roman Catholic writer whose own religious discipline "consists chiefly of deeds." No doubt, Mme. Maritain would forcefully deny that there was a conflict, or even merely a contrast, between the "deeds" and the "grace given inwardly to believers" within her own religious loyalty. The Jewish reader, who can look back to an even older tradition in which "faith" and "works" were harmoniously blended, has a right to expect fairer treatment at the hands of Christians in general, and of Roman Catholics in particular.

Cornelia and Irving Suessman provide a profound Christological interpretation of Chagall's various "Crucifixion" paintings (with reproductions that, unfortunately, are not in color). While there is no objective criterion by which this thesis can either be established or refuted, it is, I believe, of no little interest to note that Chagall (who is here quoted as saying about his own paintings: "I don't understand them at all") has not, to date, become a convert to Christianity.

Some of the contributions, however, are valuable in their own right, even outside the realm of Catholic apologetics. Father John Oesterreicher's exposition of "The Enigma of Simone Weil" is one such. Simone Weil rebelled against her Jewish antecedents and found her way to the very gates of the Roman Church, but in Father Oesterreicher's view she never quite grasped the full Christian truth. And her inability to become a whole-hearted Christian was due, *mirabile dictu,* to her very opposition to Judaism, and hence to the Judaic element which went into the making of Christianity. Father Oesterreicher performs a great service by quoting in detail those pronouncements of Simone Weil's on "Israel" which are generally omitted from the English translations of her works "to spare the sensibilities of their readers, and not least those of Simone Weil's admirers."

Dr. James V. Mullaney's review of Will Herberg's *Judaism and Modern Man* offers a healthy corrective to Mr. Herberg's rather one-sided "commitment." "By selecting the existentialist approach to the Bible and Jewish tradition, and excluding all other sources, Mr. Herberg has cut himself off from that uncomplicated love of truth which rejoices in *every* articulation of the truth." It is good to see that Catholics still expect a modern spokesman of Judaism to link himself to the classic intellectual tradition of Maimonides and the Schoolmen, and that they do not regard the current anti-naturalist, existentialist orientation as the last word that can be spoken on behalf of Judaism to modern man.

THE BRIDGE also contains the most sober and dispassionate account of the infamous Finaly case (see Nicolas Bandy's "The Affair of the Finaly Children" in COMMENTARY June 1953) this reviewer has yet encountered. Father Edward H. Flannery exhibits a full command of all the relevant facts, and a fine appreciation of the rights and wrongs on both sides. It should be remembered, however, that he wrote his piece *after* the conclusion of the case. This may have something to do with his attempt to clear the Church of any *initial* responsibility, or even interest, in the matter. Thus, Mlle. Brun, the "villain" of the drama who had the children baptized, is shown to be rather lukewarm in her Catholic attachments, and as having no *religious* motivations for her action, "but only the natural desire to have [the Finaly children] included in the festivities of First Communion, a high point in school life."

But the final decision of the courts is by no means the end of the *affaire* as far as the Church is concerned. Baptism, after all, works *ex opere operato,* and, therefore, while the baptism of the Finaly children is now admitted to have been "illicit and imprudent," it is none-

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theless "valid." The cleric, deprived in our day of the secular arm of the state, can only hope that "Christ will triumph in their souls even though they are removed from the Church's motherly care."

Father Flannery refrains from bringing the Mortara case into his discussion. It began when, in 1858, a Christian maid-servant of the Jewish family Mortara, in Bologna, admitted that she had baptized the young child Edgar in order to save his soul. The police was immediately sent into the house to snatch the child away from his parents so that he could benefit from a Catholic education. All protests, including those of the press, of Sir Moses Montefiore, and even of Napoleon III, proved unsuccessful. Pope Pius IX backed this kidnapping to the full, and the universal protest merely induced the pontiff to change his "liberal" attitude towards the Jews into one of hatred. Edgar Montara was kept away from his parents, and educated for the Catholic priesthood.

The historian of church-state relations will find it most instructive to note how the Church, adamant in the somewhat analogous Mortara case of almost a hundred years ago, can now find theological support for her acquiescence in the outcome of the Finaly case.

THE book makes interesting reading, but whether it can serve as a real "bridge" is quite a different question. We have noted the role of Trypho in Justin's *Dialogue* as merely that of a straw man. In *The Bridge* not even a Trypho appears. Therefore, to claim as the editors do in their "Statement of Purpose" that one party to this modern dialogue "speaks but indirectly" is to indulge in understatement. The Jewish facts are refracted through Christian interpretations so consistently that the Christian is unlikely to obtain any worthwhile information about Jewish life and thought. The Jew, on the other hand, appreciative as he may be of the attempt at "bridge-building," will be wary of the materials that went into the construction of this particular bridge, and will find himself too estranged by its very terms of reference to give the Christian claims their due attention.

The fundamental question raised by the publication of *The Bridge* is one that concerns the very possibility of a real "dialogue" between the Church and Judaism. A Maimonides and, to a somewhat exaggerated extent, a Franz Rosenzweig could appreciate the historic role of Christianity within the divine scheme of things. A Claude Montefiore could bring a sympathetic understanding to the Synoptic Gospels, a Klausner to Jesus, and a Harry A. Wolfson to the Patristic literature. But can the Church be satisfied with this? Can a Jewish understanding of the central Christian "facts" ever go far enough, from the Christian point of view, without an ultimate conversion to Christianity? Can we be so sure, moreover, that the results of such objective investigations into Christian origins by Jewish scholars will be welcomed by the Church in all cases?

Yet it is only along such lines that the modern Jew can come to an understanding with Christianity. This is where our age differs from those previous centuries during which Judaeo-Christian "dialogues" (if such they can be called) took the form of argument about the Christological interpretation of Old Testament "proof texts." The Christians propounded, and the Jews refuted. Today, this defense of the Hebrew Bible against Christological imputations is carried on by liberal Christian scholars themselves, and the Jew can now exchange his defensive attitude for one of active appreciation of the Christian sources in their own right. This has led to the interesting result, which must be quite unacceptable to traditionally inclined Christians, that Jews are beginning to reclaim the "Jewish Jesus," while not budging one iota from their ancestors' rejection of the "Christian Christ."

What, then, will the Synagogue have to say to the Church in view of this new approach? To a certain extent it depends on whether the Synagogue is going to give up its general state of passivity in the battle of ideas, and resume its long interrupted active missionary endeavor. In any event, the Synagogue will show a sympathetic understanding of the political, historical, and psychological factors which made for the wide acceptance of trinitarian Christianity. The Synagogue will show understanding, not condemnation. At the same time, the Synagogue will not conceal its conviction that, necessary as the spread of Christianity may have been, it presents in its traditional formulations but an intermediate step between paganism and the ultimate acceptance of Jewish monotheism.

AND even before "the End of Days," the Synagogue can admonish the Church to be true to that heritage of Israel which it claims to have

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incorporated within its own system. Jews can help to clear up time-honored errors that have been the stock in trade of Christian conceptions of Judaism—such as the relation between Justice and Mercy, Faith and Deeds, Universalism and Particularism. (We have seen that even the well-meaning contributors to *The Bridge* cannot completely divest themselves of this antiquated baggage of polemical misrepresentation.) Above all, the Synagogue can speak to the Church about the dynamics of Jewish religious development, pointing out the absurdity of regarding Judaism as something that was frozen into an unchangeable pattern some time before the birth of Jesus.

And what can the Church say to the Synagogue? For, it should be remembered, the Church *has* to speak to the Synagogue, and as long as it would remain true to its own spirit and *raison d'être* it *must* hope for the ultimate conversion of Israel. This hope may be soft-pedaled in the interests of good will and political expediency, but no sincere and convinced Jew would demand the sacrifice of sincerity and conviction on the part of the Christian. Thus the Church will continue to preach to the Jew about its crucified Messiah. But it will have to adapt its preaching to the changing needs of the times. It can no longer operate with a Christological interpretation of the Hebrew Bible based, in addition, on a belief in verbal inspiration which not only many Jews but a considerable part of Christendom have by now given up.

And the Church will have to realize (as some contributors to the *Bridge* indeed do) that it is no longer dealing with a pre-Herodian people of Palestine whose enthusiasm could be enlisted for a scion of the Davidic dynasty or for an apocalyptic savior "coming with the clouds of heaven." The Church will have to take *modern* Judaism for its base of operations, and try to fill what spiritual voids it can discover therein. What these are, or rather, what the Church can do by way of remedy even where these voids are felt and realized by Jews themselves, it is impossible for a believing Jew to say. This only the believing Christian can know. But in scrutinizing Judaism with this helpful aim in view the Church, whatever its own conclusions, will keep Judaism on the alert—just as a vigorous Judaism will stimulate the Church. It is on this level, and this level alone, that we have to look for the real "bridge" and the true "dialogue."

Wicked American Innocence

THE QUIET AMERICAN. By GRAHAM GREENE. Viking. 249 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by PHILIP RAHV

IN *The Quiet American* Graham Greene has drawn upon his first-hand experience of the war in Indo-China to produce a thriller with political complications. It is outselling all his other books in England but won't go over so well in this country—for obvious reasons. The novel is in the main a crime story, or whodunit—a well-constructed one with tension maintained throughout and a surprise ending that many a reader will kick himself for not having foreseen. Add to this the sharp up-to-date tone of very knowing, brusque, tough irony and provocative (tender-hard) disillusionment, plus a liberal dose of unsparing sexual detail, and you get the seemingly irresistible formula that is being applied nowadays more and more widely in fiction.

The formula is of course an American product. In Greene's anglicized version it remains essentially unaltered, however much invested with more worldly finish and sophistication. As G. L. Arnold has suggested in a perceptive review in the *Twentieth Century,* for all its bitter anti-Americanism, *The Quiet American* depends for its chief effects on what Greene has absorbed from contemporary American writing. Thomas Fowler—the narrator-protagonist, who is so clearly the author's alter ego in his political reactions and in some other ways too, and who embodies the narrative's tone and perspective—exists as a novelistic creation "only by virtue of his descent from a long line of 'tough' characters in modern American fiction. . . . He could have walked straight out of the fictional Los Angeles of James M. Cain and Raymond Chandler; indeed, there are moments when one half expects him to drop the mask and admit that he is really Philip Marlowe, Mr. Chandler's private eye, sleuthing around in Indo-China improbably disguised as a British correspondent. Put Fowler down in Hollywood and you have the ideal part for Humphrey Bogart, down to the cynical wisecracks about women and the verbal fencing with the police."

I myself would add to Arnold's charting of influences the prepotent name of Hemingway, who is the true originator of the tone

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and attitudes which the so-called California school of thriller-writers has vulgarized and which Greene has belatedly refurbished for his own use. To my mind, however, the fact that he has laid American fiction so heavily under contribution in the making of this novel counts for a good deal more, culturally speaking, than the immediate opinions of which it is the vehicle. Political opinions of this sort are in their very nature ephemeral. Of far greater historical import, for better or worse, is the gravitational pull exerted for some time now by the American sensibility on the literature of the Old World.

STILL, there is the political content of this novel which can be dealt with in its own terms. What it comes to is a clever attack on the United States, its policies and methods, values and ideals. But the attack is pettish and fretful and it won't do to become over-exercised about it. Indignation is scarcely in order. After all, American writers are hardly noted for modest restraint in portraying modes of life other than their own. A good many of them, from Cooper down to the latest novelist reporting on the Roman girls, have toured Europe and expressed their view of it with manic disregard of other peoples' feelings. Think of the grossness of Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad,* or, *mutatis mutandis,* of the generic duplicity that Henry James imputes to the French in such narratives as *The American* and *Madame de Mauves.* Actually, what Greene has done is to turn the Jamesian theme of innocence vs. experience inside out. Where James sees this innocence as a redemptive quality that will save the Old World, Greene sees it as positively ruinous in the world of today, "a kind of insanity." James certainly overplayed the motif of innocence, but in his own inimitable fashion he made something grand of it. He is essentially disinterested. Not so Greene, who seizes upon our reputed innocence as his prey.

His Americans in Indo-China are presented as meddlers whose innocence puts all in jeopardy. "You can't blame the innocents, they are always guiltless. All you can do is to control or eliminate them." And since in the case of Alden Pyle—the "quiet American"—control is out of the question, Fowler connives in his "elimination" by Communist agents. Pyle has taken Fowler's native mistress away from him and is also mixed up in undercover activities looking to the creation of a "Third Force"—a mythical entity under the circumstances. His political intrigues involve him in the bombing of a public square in which most of the casualties are women and children. Fowler's motivation in helping to "eliminate" Pyle, being at once political and personal, is ambiguous in the extreme; as a political act, at least, it scarcely jibes with his persistent display of himself as a man so far gone in a partly cynical and partly despairing estimate of the human condition that he has long ago made it an article of his creed not to take sides. He is philosophically a neutralist; all he wants out of life is his girl and his opium pipe. As for Pyle, he is real enough on a certain level, in spite of the touches of caricature and the guile with which Greene fills in his portrait. With his good intentions and ignorance of political realities, a built-in ignorance as it were, he is recognizably a late and rather genteel version of the type that in former days we used to characterize as the "lib-lab" do-gooder. What is unacceptable in Greene's portrait, however, is the insinuation that Pyle is *the* representative American. In projecting him as a total image of what America means to itself and to the world at large, Greene makes it all too easy for himself, stating his case with such glibness and plain malice that he invites us to discount him as a suspect witness.

Nor does the mischief caused by Pyle justify the sympathy expressed in the novel for the French colonial regime on the one hand and the national-Communist Vietminh on the other. If Pyle stands for innocence, then what do the French colonials stand for? Presumably for experience and maturity, and so it is repeatedly intimated. But what price experience, what price maturity, if all they led to is the egregious French blundering in Indo-China that aroused the unforgiving hatred of their subjects and lost them the war? As for the Communist Vietminh, Greene appears to admire its efficiency and its closeness to the peasant masses—but the Communists are always "close to the masses" in the period of revolutionary conquest. The issue is what will happen later, when their power is consolidated and identification with the masses no longer serves Communist interest. One doubts that Greene is sufficiently political-minded to do justice to such considerations.

As a political novelist Greene is on alien ground. The politics is of the surface; underneath there is the seething of his old obsessions. His religiosity has always tended to be

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more Manichaean than orthodox, and the Manichaean conception of nature as evil emerges very strongly in the alternate fascination and disgust with which he describes sexual relations. Fowler's *liaison* with his Annamite mistress is an instance of this morbid dualism. Fowler both envies those who can believe in God and mistrusts them. He feels that they are "keeping up their courage with a fable of the changeless and the permanent. Death was far more certain than God, and with death there would be no longer the daily possibility of love's dying. The nightmare of a future of boredom and indifference would lift." Though on grounds of belief it is hardly possible to identify Greene with his protagonist in this passage, still they are not so very far apart in sensibility. It is of the essence of that modern religiosity, so widespread in present-day literature, which finds its motive power in malignant equivocations of the flesh, that it is ever teetering on the edge of stark unbelief and a life of sheer sensation.

Greene has been generally overestimated of late. In control of a variety of fictional techniques and of a truly personal tone deftly enforced in stylistic terms, he is an exceptionally readable writer who is more apt to entertain than to disturb us. The claims made for him as a contemporary writer of the first rank are farfetched, to say the least. His imaginative faculty is more manipulative than creative, and he is nearly always at cross-purposes with himself, his facile brilliance getting in the way of any final integration of form and meaning. His work is symptomatic rather than deeply expressive of modern life—and what it is symptomatic of is the exacerbation of modern nerves.

A Handbook on Prejudice

THE FEARS MEN LIVE BY. By SELMA HIRSH. Harper. 164 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by DENNIS H. WRONG

ANTI-SEMITISM may very well be endemic to rapidly changing industrial societies which remain at least nominally Christian in outlook. Yet its utility as a political weapon has diminished greatly since World War II. Even in a country as culturally and socially homogeneous as France, Pierre Poujade's anti-Semitic outbursts appear to have hindered rather than helped his movement. And in the United States the sales of *Marjorie Morningstar, Look's* much publicized article on American Jews, and the hypersensitivity of right-wing demagogues like McCarthy to charges of anti-Semitism are among the signs of the times. Perhaps it is just that, as Richard Hofstadter has put it, standards of hating are rising along with standards of living, so that demagogues eager to win a national following arouse a greater response by attacking groups that are considerably more powerful than ethnic or religious minorities, such as Harvard University, the Ford Foundation, and the State Department.

Mrs. Hirsh's book is essentially a popularization of the five-volume "Studies in Prejudice" series, sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, which was conceived and written just after the war at a time when many assumptions about American society that now appear questionable were widely held. She makes greatest use of the findings of *The Authoritarian Personality* by T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, the longest and most influential volume in the series and in many ways the most contentious. (It was reviewed at length in COMMENTARY in June 1950 by Nathan Glazer, who then discussed it further in March 1954.)

MRS. HIRSH has tried, however, to adapt her theme to the new climate of opinion. Most of the authors of the "Studies in Prejudice" series kept one eye on Nazi Germany when interpreting their rich material on the psychological roots of ethnic prejudice in America. Their belief in the possible, or even probable, rise of an American fascist movement making a mass appeal to race hatred established the social and historical context for their observations. Mrs. Hirsh has abandoned the neo-Marxist tone of apocalypse that pervaded *The Authoritarian Personality,* substituting for it the milder and more abstract notion of a conflict in American values between humanitarian altruism and success-striving, between "being good" and "making good." The influence of Margaret Mead, with her tendency to write of "our culture" as if it were a single-hued blanket enveloping everyone, is more evident here than Marx, Freud, or modern sociology. Yet Mrs. Hirsh's theory that "contradictory commandments now so firmly woven into our culture that we hardly know which we are truly to heed" are the source of ethnic prejudice seems even less adequate than the conspiratorial

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theory of a ruthless American ruling class tacitly encouraging racist demagogy in order to stave off a drive for social reform. Her view that tension between the demands of morality and ambition to rise socially and economically generates ethnic prejudice fails entirely to distinguish between the different situations of sub-groups in the population.

Mrs. Hirsh adds to the topicality of her book by including a chapter on attitudes towards Negroes and a discussion of Communist authoritarianism, a subject completely neglected in the original volumes. The "Studies in Prejudice" series contained much scattered information on anti-Negro attitudes, but its main concern was with anti-Semitism, for good and sufficient theoretical reasons. The support given by all community institutions in the South and parts of the North to racial discrimination makes it much less likely that strongly anti-Negro, as distinct from anti-Semitic, attitudes are characteristic of people with a particular personality structure suffering definable neurotic disturbances. Mrs. Hirsh ably reviews the sexual fears, the psychic mechanisms of projection and displacement, and the circular logic of the prejudiced, but most of what she says has long been known and lacks the psychological specificity, the detailed tracing of prejudice to its roots in childhood biography, that was the most illuminating and novel contribution of *The Authoritarian Personality.*

THE trouble with Mrs. Hirsh's book is that she has tried to write a general primer on ethnic intolerance in American society while using material that is representative of a rather specialized *psychological* approach to the problem. T. W. Adorno and his colleagues themselves repeatedly insisted that their modified psychoanalytic method was by no means capable of dealing with all facets of ethnic prejudice. Thus, along with much skillful summarizing of the parent volume, Mrs. Hirsh includes far too many unintegrated observations on such topics as the economic advantage to the South of a cheap Negro labor supply, the role of law in controlling discriminatory practices, and the connection between prejudice and the Puritan tradition.

Moreover, almost all popular presentations of the psychoanalytic approach to social problems, and a good deal of professional psychoanalytic writing as well, suffer from one major

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defect: taken together, they explain far too much. Prejudice, Communist sympathies, crime, alcoholism, and wife-beating are all shown to be symptoms of basic anxiety, self-hatred, and childhood misery. If people guilty of these vices are "neurotic," the writer is often led to imply, and sometimes actually to assert, that people who lack the particular symptom he is concerned with are "normal." The unconvincing attempt by the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* to delineate a "democratic personality" free from ethnic intolerance and mentally healthy is a case in point. Intense prejudice may be a symptom of personal neurosis, but its absence certainly does not justify the assumption of a hypothetical unprejudiced "normal" personality type.*

In spite of their persistent tendency to make a liberal political outlook almost a criterion of mental health, Adorno and his collaborators occasionally recognize this, as does Mrs. Hirsh, who is aware of the trenchant criticisms that have been directed at the original research. Political liberals free of the slightest taint of ethnic prejudice may, after all, take to drink out of neurotic motives, just as people with strong hearts may suffer from ailments of the liver.

APART from the unsatisfactory effort to identify and sanctify a non-neurotic "democratic personality," little attempt is made in the "Studies in Prejudice" series to describe those personality types, whether neurotic or normal, that are *not* predisposed to ethnic intolerance. An exception may be found in one of the shorter volumes of the series: *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder,* by Nathan W. Ackerman and Marie Jahoda. They write, after enumerating the psychiatric symptoms displayed by anti-Semites: "In this broad range of diagnosis and vague symptoms . . . one type of disturbance becomes conspicuous through its absence. None of the cases manifested a genuine, deep *depression.*"

It is probably too much to expect a frankly popular book to exhibit such subtleties of psychological characterization. The effort to present broad conclusions shorn of the detail in which they were embedded in the "Studies in Prejudice" volumes inevitably highlights weaknesses inherent in all psychoanalytic interpretations of social facts.

*See Bruno Bettelheim's review of *Prejudice and Your Child* by Kenneth Clark in last month's issue—ED.

Scholarship of Desperation

ORESTES BROWNSON, SELECTED ESSAYS. Edited with an Introduction by RUSSELL KIRK. Regnery (Gateway Editions). 221 pp. $.95.

Reviewed by BERNARD W. WISHY

EVEN before 1939, when Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. published his biography, there had been a small continuing interest, particularly among Catholic intellectuals, in Orestes Brownson (1803-1876), the New England liberal and reformer who went over to Rome in the 1840's. Schlesinger's interpretation of this controversial writer, whom Lord Acton called the most penetrating American thinker of his day, was followed in the next few years by two more biographies, as well as specialized studies and several volumes of Brownson's own writings. Now from the twenty volumes of his works Russell Kirk has made a small selection of six essays, all of them, except the famous "Present State of Society" (1843), written after Brownson's conversion. They are offered us by Mr. Kirk as another contribution to the literature of American neo-conservatism.

Brownson was a familiar American type: the rootless man, intelligent and energetic, moving from one system of ideas to another in a society which, lacking the fixities of European life, failed to settle any permanent claim on him. Aside from a brief enrollment in an academy, Brownson, born of a poor Vermont family, was self-educated, a fact perhaps reflected in the undisciplined character of his mind. He read Berkeley, Hume, Godwin, Locke, Kant, Cousin, Leroux, and Gioberti; sowed his Transcendental wild oats by often visiting and eventually enrolling his son at Brook Farm; and earned his living by writing, preaching, and editing. The list of his intellectual and religious affiliations reads like a survey of everything America had to offer in the age of Jackson: Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, Universalism, Robert Owenism and Fanny Wrightism, Unitarianism, and Transcendentalism.

His early political opinions, neither fixed nor unusual, mirrored the major enthusiasms of his time. In the 1820's and 1830's he was associated with "workingmen's" movements (which voiced the protest against privilege of

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what were actually recently established or prospective small entrepreneurs). Brownson thus became a spokesman for the "equal rights" ideology whose exploitation by Andrew Jackson in the 1830's transformed American politics. After he established his *Boston Quarterly Review* in 1838, Brownson was one of the leading intellectuals in the Jacksonian Democratic party. Like his friends, who were among the great and near great of the age, Brownson was "born for reform."

In 1840, the Whigs, identified by the Jacksonians as the enemies of democracy, consummated the "equal rights" revolution by finally abandoning their public defense of privilege and aristocratic rule and passing themselves off, demagogically, as better friends of the common man than the Jacksonians. Brownson was dismayed by the Whig victory in the election of 1840; he thought that in voting for "Tippecanoe" Harrison and Tyler against Van Buren the people had repudiated their divine mission as guardians of democratic truth. By 1844, the people's betrayal of the egalitarian crusade, along with still unexplained private reasons, had led Brownson to an about-face familiar in our own time; he moved from the embrace of the Enlightenment into the arms of Original Sin.

CONTRARY to the usual assertions, then and now, Brownson's conversion to Catholicism was not due to any "failure of nerve," nor did it represent "the end of all doubt" for him. It took a great deal of nerve in the 1840's (it still does) to become a Catholic. If we accept Merle Curti's notion that it was an "age of reason and morality," we forget, among other things, the extent and frenzy of its anti-Catholicism: mobs, burnings, religio-pornographic literature, and squads of Irish Catholics posted around churches to protect them. Boston, the Athens of America, where Brownson lived, was a center of this insanity. His move was thus made at a certain personal risk and with much searching of heart. It was not, however, a move to intellectual consistency or peace of soul.

In extreme reaction against liberalism, he worked for Calhoun's nomination in 1844 and defended slavery for over a decade, prompting speculation about whether he or the Catholic Church, which at the time equivocated on slavery, really believed in "natural law" as a guarantee for human dignity. His Catholicism also did not prevent Brownson from joining the Nativist attack on immigrants (but not on Catholicism) at the high tide of the Nativist movement in the 50's.

After 1844 a champion of "states' rights," Brownson later swung over and took up an ingenious defense of the Union, while his vituperative anti-liberalism ("When I hear a man declaiming lustily for liberty, I suspect it is for liberty to pick my pocket or cut my throat") gave way in the late 50's and 60's to a form of "Christian democracy" favoring universal suffrage and the rights of man. In his last years, this in turn collapsed again into a cantankerous Catholic orthodoxy.

Mr. Kirk claims that after 1844 Brownson was "a consistent Catholic and a consistent conservative," but the facts hardly bear him out. The impression they leave is of a man with a minor talent for philosophic analysis, but splenetic and furious in a senseless inconsistency. Did Acton, when praising him, know of Brownson's remarks that only Catholics could be great artists or good scientists? Can this "weathercock of opinions" (as James Gordon Bennett called him), who was often merely vulgar and "at the mercy of every novelty in speculation," be compared, as he has been, with Catholics like Charles Péguy and Gerard Manley Hopkins? Why do Mr. Kirk and Peter Viereck recommend him to us as one of the finer neglected figures in American intellectual history?

For one thing, interest in "natural law" has been renewed during the past two decades. Even more recently there has been a revival of Augustinian political theory using Original Sin to criticize the larger pretensions of liberalism and democracy. Brownson's defection from liberalism lends itself as another case history with which to point up various types of Christian criticism of secular democratic thought. But underneath this scholarly impulse, one senses another motive—and senses it particularly in Mr. Kirk.

In their effort to define, or rather invent, an American tradition of conservative thought, the neo-conservatives have resorted to a scholarship of desperation. Brownson is being urged upon us not for the *quality* of his thought or writings, but for the direction of his opinions; for polemical purposes he, like Irving Babbitt, is invoked as a worthy American heir and fellow spirit of Burke, Coleridge, Tocqueville, and Burckhardt—to the distress of more discriminating Tories, who can only be dismayed by

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JEWISH NEWSLETTER

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The *Jewish Newsletter* is a bi-weekly publication of Jewish dissent and non-conformity. It was started in 1948 when the State of Israel ushered in a new period of Jewish history characterized by an intense nationalism and mounting emotionalism which well nigh wiped out all individualistic independent thinking, criticism and self-criticism among Jews.

The *Jewish Newsletter* came into being as a spontaneous protest on the part of a small remnant of unorganized Jewish individualists and non-conformists who have withstood the emotional onslaught and have retained, against great odds, their faith in the right of the individual to say "No" even to the most cherished dogmas of the group.

With this principle as the sole guide, the *Jewish Newsletter* has worked to counteract the trend of the age towards party control of thought and to correct the one-sided, imbalanced picture which a fiercely partisan press has painted of the Jewish scene.

During eight and a half years of difficult struggle, the *Jewish Newsletter* has been established as a recognized platform from which the independent, liberal and unorganized section of American Jews voice their views which would have otherwise remained inarticulate.

During the last few months when the crisis in the Middle East has risen to its present intensity, the *Jewish Newsletter* has opened its columns to a series of discussions by independent thinkers of the Jewish community on the outstanding vital problems created by the Middle East crisis for American Jews. Among the questions which are still under discussion are:

1. **The relationship of American Jews to Israel.**
2. **The dilemma of the American non-Zionists.**
3. **Political pressures and their repercussions on American Jews.**
4. **Is there a threat of political anti-Semitism in the United States?**

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this continuing failure of imagination and taste.

The attempt to rehabilitate Brownson is symptomatic of the extent to which the neo-conservatives have forsaken the God of their fathers, *real* history, to lust after the "progressive" god of ideology, and a mark of how far they must still go to establish an effective and intellectually respectable alternative to liberalism. Perhaps they dare not look history in the face for fear of what it might reveal: that the "liberal spirit" has by now become history too. The excesses of liberalism in an irreversibly liberal civilization, liberalism's tendency to start with mind and with happiness as the ultimate good and to end at times in ideology and oppression, can only be met by the power of what is best in our traditions and institutions (most of which happen to be liberal), not by invoking counter-abstractions and a counter-ideology—as if all it took to make a tradition was to think one up! It is a major irony of our time that a conservative critique of liberalism should be characterized by so abstract and doctrinaire a use of mind. One imagines Burke, that paladin of the concrete, the specific, the actual, shuddering in his grave.

Not Ideas but Life

NOTES OF A NATIVE SON. By JAMES BALDWIN. Beacon. 175 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT W. FLINT

HERE is a collection of ten essays, all bearing in one way or another on the Negro question, by the brilliant young author of *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. Readers of that admirable first novel will not be surprised by the vivid mordancy and sardonic humor of these essays. What does surprise—and I intend to labor the point a little—is their equivocation.

If I merely wanted to be clever at Mr. Baldwin's expense, I might point out how readily *Notes of a Native Son* evokes an already shopworn judgment on writers of my own generation, namely, that we can never resist the temptation to reduce the ironies and paradoxical despairs of the 20's into a sort of uniformly marketable commodity. The wryly pontifical ironies of a T. S. Eliot jostle the raffish ironies of a Ring Lardner, and manner threatens to swallow matter. Mr. Baldwin informs us that "Further, the militant men and

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women of the thirties were not, upon examination, significantly emancipated from their antecedents, however bitterly they might consider themselves estranged or however gallantly they struggled to build a better world. However they might extol Russia, their concept of a better world was quite helplessly American and betrayed a certain thinness of imagination, a suspect reliance on suspect and badly digested formulae, and a positively fretful romantic haste." The first sentence, with its solemn "upon examination," was surely carved from Eliot's *Sacred Wood,* while the rather haggard elegance of the second puts us strongly in mind of Anthony West and his fellow pundits on the *New Yorker.* No doubt it is remarkable enough to find this kind of writing in a book by a Negro on the Negro question, but it remains something of a stunt nevertheless and not particularly germane to the book's real quality, which is essentially novelistic—dramatic, dense, bitter, swift, and self-absorbed, the work of a born novelist whose political and social opinions, however just, are uniquely private and, from a purely political standpoint, frustratingly circular.

Mr. Baldwin's world, like that of most gifted novelists, is closed upon itself; the serpent is forever swallowing its tail. On the one hand, he imagines a literature that will take Negroes as much for granted as Jane Austen takes Englishmen; on the other, he writes with eloquent despair that "The American image of the Negro lives also in the Negro's heart; and when he has surrendered to this image life has no other possible reality." Everywhere in this book, the bent of his mind is indignant, militant, and sometimes evangelical. Yet he will pause in the middle of a brilliant report on "The Harlem Ghetto" to reflect that "Matters are not helped in the least by the fact that the white man's world, intellectually, morally, and spiritually, has the meaningless ring of a hollow drum and the odor of slow death."

THESE are strong words; they bring us back with a jolt to the fact that Baldwin, for all his easy commerce with the vocabulary of liberalism, like most "creative" writers, is an absolutist. He espouses the splendid negations of *The Wasteland,* and no Riesmanesque vision of joy-through-abundance will appease him; for "the merest arrogant hint of hatred, the faintest, withdrawn, speculative shadow of contempt," is enough to shatter it.

In other words, I think this book innocently arouses certain expectations which it has no intention, really, of satisfying. Not every serious study of a major social issue need be an important contribution to social or political theory in order to be interesting. I found *Notes of a Native Son* extremely interesting, not as the emergence into polite letters of a talented Negro, but as a piece of honest, perceptive, dramatic reporting. He renders vignettes from Harlem, Atlanta, Paris, a Swiss mountain village, and episodes from his private and family life that are not easily forgotten. Here, it seems to me, is the real fruit of his equivocation on matters where most people expect a "spokesman" to be adamant. A dozen talented *Partisan Reviewers,* of any race, could have shown up the weaknesses of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *Native Son* as well as Baldwin does. We are all very wise, these days, about the futility of strident protest. We can all write eloquently, though with an increasingly vacuous piety, about the obligation to accept our full humanity. These are good and necessary things to say. But very few of us experience our ideas as concretely or as dramatically as Mr. Baldwin experiences his. His real contribution, I think, is not ideas but life, not opinion but art. This is autobiography that future readers of his novels will return to with more than curiosity, and an important chapter in our cultural history.

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Looking Ahead

THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. By SIR GEORGE THOMSON. Cambridge University Press. 166 pp. $2.50.

UTOPIA 1976. By MORRIS L. ERNST. Rinehart. 305 pp. $3.50.

TIME FOR LIVING. By GEORGE SOULE. Viking. 184 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by THEODORE NORMAN

MANY human activities are marked by periodic fashion changes—the manufacture of women's dresses being the most obvious example. Still, it comes as a surprise to discover that books about the future of mankind are also subject to fashion's whims.

In the years following the end of the Second World War, the reigning attitude in this "science of the future" was one of foreboding and alarm. In 1948, Vogt in *The Road to Survival* and Osborn in *The Plundered Planet* expressed grave concern at the rate of depletion of the earth's resources, and observed with Malthusian grimness that the world's population was increasing faster than food production. In 1953, Osborn in *The Limits of the Earth* again took a rather dim view of future things, though one detected here and there in his work a cheerfuller note. Vogt and Osborn were looking gloomily ahead only a few generations at most, but Sir Charles Darwin, whose *The Next Million Years* likewise appeared in 1953, saw no hope for escape even in the most distant future from Malthus's dictum that the growth of population would inevitably exceed the increase in the means of sustaining it.

By the next year, however, the style in prophecy had begun to change. Nineteen fifty-four saw the publication of M. K. Bennett's the *World's Food* and Sir John Russell's *World Population and World Food Supplies,* both of which took a moderately hopeful view, and of Harrison Brown's *The Challenge of Man's Future,* a completely optimistic statement. It may well be that the gloom of the earlier books was partly due to the slow revival of European production immediately after the war, while the more sanguine tone of the 1954 volumes was due to the fact, apparent by that time, that the economy of Western Europe had more than recovered lost ground. A better appreciation of the potentialities of the atom also helped to calm fears about the future. That the new look was here to stay was confirmed by the publication early in 1955 of P. H. Killefer's unabashedly hopeful *Two Ears of Corn, Two Blades of Grass,* which was followed by the appearance in the last few months of the three books here under review.

SIR GEORGE THOMSON was Nobel Prize-winner in physics in 1937. Like other eminent English scientists—Jeans, Eddington, Huxley, and Sherrington—he is a lucid but uncondescending writer, imaginative, witty, and, on occasion, elegant. He is confident he knows what the future will look like "because as major discoveries are likely to be based on scientific principles rather than mechanical ingenuity . . . it is reasonable to predict . . . the trend." The chief guideposts Thomson uses are negative; we understand enough of physics to know what cannot be done. For example, the speed of light is the universal speed limit. No atom can go faster than that.

However, the limits set by the fundamental physical laws are very broad, affording mankind ample room within which to work. We

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shall have plenty of power, derived largely from the fusion or fission of the atom; and plenty of materials, for new sources of useful minerals will be discovered by the geophysical methods now used to find oil. We shall utilize these new supplies many times more efficiently than is done now by rearranging their internal atomic structures to make them stronger; buildings will become lighter and, as it were, filmier; they will be built on the same pattern as insect skeletons. There are animalcules in the sea that concentrate certain metals like copper and vanadium in their bodies. This useful characteristic, intensified by a breeding program, can afford plentiful supplies of these elements. It is possible to direct a narrow beam of electrons at a target; as we learn more about the micro-anatomy of the chromosome, such beams could be used to control genetic mutations. Thus monkeys able to perform simple tasks, like harvesting fruit, could be bred. A monkey operates on a pound of nuts a day, while a machine "capable of picking an orange from a tree without wrecking it" would be expensive, cumbersome, and complicated. Breeding animals for simple kinds of work might, by the way, lead to a "demand for greater intelligence, and the possibilities here are intriguing."

Sir George regards space travel as quite possible, not only to the planets of our own solar system, but to stars far outside. He is also hopeful of controlling the weather, and of increasing food production through the development of quick-growing crops suitable for cultivation in the Arctic, and by irrigation of what are now deserts.

On the side of political and social organization, Sir George has very little to say because "sociology has still to find its Newton, let alone its Planck, and prediction is guesswork." He does try his hand at solving the problem of rush-hour traffic, which he regards as "the most serious in modern transport." The best solution he can come up with is to spread big cities all over the landscape—which, to anyone who has seen Los Angeles and its environs, seems a cure worse than the disease. But Sir George's real hope in solving this and all other social and economic dilemmas lies in increasing the power of the human brain. "Even with the present brains of intelligent people man may expect a glorious future. Who will dare to set limits to what he may reach as his brain improves?"

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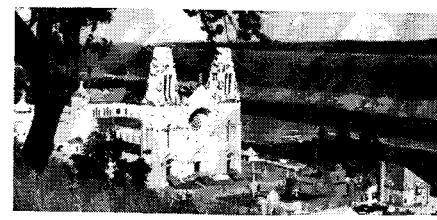

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Doubts as to the predictability of social trends don't bother Morris Ernst. He is perfectly willing to tell us what forms our laws and mores will take twenty years from now. He begins by saying that his "dream is based . . . on nothing more than an extension of present trends." And he goes on to foresee the break-up of large corporations through a revised and rationalized anti-trust procedure; a time when the "last of our skyscrapers has been built"; the growth of "thousands of new, specialized magazines carrying no advertisements at all"; and a "political party leadership [which] will develop such stature that the parties will have clear positions on each current issue." Desirable as such developments may be, it is hard to discern any present trends of which they would be the extensions. Rather, they are projections of the writer's wishes, not the fruit of his observation of the world outside.

But not only will everybody be healthy, wealthy, and wise, and fully enjoy every civil right twenty years from now, Mr. Ernst also believes that a particular feature of our future society will be the smallness of all organizations and institutions, public and private. Like Sir George Thomson, Mr. Ernst foresees the break-up of large cities and their dispersal over the landscape—and fails, apparently, to realize how much of the landscape would thereby be effaced. He expects, to take two examples, the trend toward concentration in newspaper publishing to be reversed; and an increase in the importance of municipal as against state and national governments. It is hard to account for the intensity of this animus towards any and all large organizations which Mr. Ernst shares with so many liberal people, especially as it runs counter to a good deal of evidence in favor of bigness. The case of national versus local governments, or large cities against small ones as centers of culture, might be cited as examples.

He is on firmer ground in his forecasts of economic and technological trends. He sees everyone enjoying an income of $4,000 a year by 1976, and having a lot more leisure in which to spend it; the atom, the sun, and the tides taking care of our needs for power; automation freeing men and women from routine tasks; the farmer protected from the vagaries of the weather; and all of us freed from the fear of bodily or mental ills.

George Soule's economic projections are much like Ernst's. He, too, foresees a shorter work week, an income of $25,000 per family—in eighty years—ampler power, automation taking over all routine tasks, etc., etc. Such conclusions about our material future, however, could be reached by anyone acquainted with the subject. What cannot be easily foreseen, and is therefore more interesting to discuss, is the effect material changes will have on character and personality.

Mr. Ernst, in his own words "an incurable glandular optimist," is inclined to see the man of the future as a good deal "happier." He will enjoy mental health because of the ministrations of more numerous and better-trained psychiatrists than we now have; social conflicts will be diminished because of greater equality of wealth and the application of a more advanced social science; and the greater leisure and incomes to be enjoyed in 1976 will afford everyone ample opportunity for living a full life. Mr. Soule, indeed, devotes most of his space to describing the euphoric state of mind of those who will enjoy the fruits of material progress. He points out that for many millions of Americans the future is already here, seeing that they have enough income to satisfy all their necessities as well as buy most of the luxuries they want—golf clubs, records, motorboats, trips abroad, etc., etc.—and have the time, too, to enjoy these things. As Mr. Soule puts it, mankind is already on the threshold of a new "instar"—a biological term meaning "stage of life."

The characteristic of this coming stage is that man's main efforts will no longer have to be devoted to work, or to thinking about how to get ahead materially. The personality, the mental set, the values appropriate to the two hundred years that have elapsed since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution will no longer be relevant to the new age of wealth and leisure. In trying to visualize these new values, Mr. Soule starts from the fact that for many years now workers have shown a tendency to renounce the additional income earned by longer hours of labor; he expects this trend to continue. In other words, once their basic needs are satisfied, men prefer free time to what might be called surplus material goods.

The only serpent likely to enter this new Garden of Eden is *bad taste*, as spread by low-quality books, plays, movies, and TV programs. In Mr. Soule's opinion, it is the steadily mounting costs of production that make publishers,

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IN THE end of days it shall come to pass,
That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains,
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And many nations shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
So that he may teach us of his ways,
And we will walk in his paths;
For the law shall go forth from Zion,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."
And He shall judge among many peoples,
And rebuke strong nations afar off;
They shall beat their swords into plowshares
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree;
And none shall make them afraid;
For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.
For as all the peoples walk every one in the name of his god,
We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever.

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Micah, Chapter IV

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for example, reluctant to print adventurous books, and cause impresarios not to put on plays of doubtful box-office appeal. This tendency, he hopes, will be reversed by the greater opportunities people will have to practice the arts themselves and thereby develop a valid sense of discrimination.

ALL three authors agree that our descendants will enjoy every material comfort we can conceive of and doubtless many more we can't. As far as the psyche is concerned, they see the man of the future as relaxed and secure, spending most of his time doing what he wants to do—in research, the arts, in handicrafts, in helping his fellowman (though it would seem unnecessary to spend much time at that), or just plain loafing.

But the ghost of Malthus disturbs this dream. Assuming the bomb does not explode and we have descendants, will we have too many for this bliss to go around? Mr. Soule points out that the experience of all industrialized societies would indicate that they ultimately limit their birth rate. Mr. Ernst believes that the birth rate will be held down by the use of contraceptive pills or some such simple preventive measure likely to be developed in the near future. Right now, however, the world's population is increasing so fast that it will have doubled in seventy years. If this rate is maintained for another two hundred years, the earth will have twenty billion people; it is hard to believe that such a multitude could live in comfort, no matter how fast new sources of power and raw material are developed. In any case, seventy years after that there would be forty billions of us, which would be far too many under almost any circumstances. Presumably, as Ernst and Soule believe, men will be intelligent enough to limit their numbers in time. But it must be remembered that even at very much slower rates of increase than prevail at present, there will ultimately be overwhelming numbers of people on the earth. The pessimism of Sir Charles Darwin in *The Next Million Years* derived from his belief that no measures to restrict population can be effective for long. It is not quite so easy to lay the ghost of Malthus as our authors seem to imply.

Lastly, even if our descendants are kept down to numbers that will make utopia possible, will they be really happy? Our three authors are troubled by doubts.

To have all our wishes satisfied, to have nothing to strive for, what could give rise to greater discontent? Sir George suggests that space travel may afford an outlet for man's restless spirit. Morris Ernst implicitly, and George Soule explicitly, see men expressing this spirit in less physical ways. Men will advance into the unknown along the paths of aesthetic creation, or by the invention of new and improved means of organizing society. They will devote themselves to thinking, which Mr. Soule calls the hardest kind of work. It is hoped, then, that the man of the future will spend most of his time and energy in intellectual or artistic pursuits. But whoever counted artists and intellectuals happy?

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI is rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Washington, Pa.

PHILIP RAHV is co-founder and co-editor of *Partisan Review*.

DENNIS H. WRONG's article on David Riesman appeared in last month's issue.

BERNARD W. WISHY teaches American history at Columbia University.

ROBERT W. FLINT contributes criticism and essays to the literary magazines.

THEODORE NORMAN is General Manager of the Jewish Agricultural Society.

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